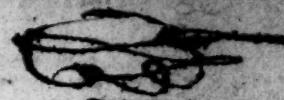


Andrew Thomson
A 
V O Y A G E *John Allen*
TO THE *1798*
EAST-INDIES AND CHINA;

PERFORMED

BY ORDER OF LEWIS XV. *1776*

Between the Years 1774 and 1781. *1774*

LIBRARY.
WESTMINSTER
CONTAINING
A DESCRIPTION OF THE MANNERS, RELIGION, ARTS,
AND SCIENCES, OF THE INDIANS, CHINESE,
PEGOUINS, AND OF THE ISLANDERS OF MADAGASCAR;
ALSO
OBSERVATIONS ON THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE, THE ISLES
OF FRANCE AND BOURBON, THE MALDIVIAS,
CEYLON, MALACCA, THE PHILLIP-
PINES, AND MOLUCCAS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
MONSIEUR SONNERAT,

Commissary of the Marine, &c. &c.

By **FRANCIS MAGNUS.**

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CALCUTTA:
FROM THE PRESS OF STUART AND COOPER.
M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

Б. А. Г. О. В.

БИТ ОТ

БЕНО-СИА СЕЙЧАС ЧАС

СИЯНИЕ ЧИСЛО

УДИВИТЕЛЬНОСТЬ

1871 БИТ АРГУН СИЯНИЕ ЧИСЛО

СИЯНИЕ ЧИСЛО СИЯНИЕ ЧИСЛО



БИТ АРГУН

СИЯНИЕ ЧИСЛО

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARY

NOTE

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INTRODUCTION.

ALL nations have an origin, true or fabulous, to which they recur; but the origin of the Indians is lost in the obscurity of time, and simple conjectures are the only proofs left, upon this head, as well as upon many others of a similar nature.

The ancients esteemed the Indians as the primitive inhabitants of this earth: appearances warrant the opinion; which, however, truth cannot demonstrate. We have every reason to believe, that the first children of nature were entitled to her peculiar care:

neither the frozen regions of the north, nor the burning sands of Lybia, were the cradle she chose for mankind. It was indispensable that the soil where they first existed should, without their labour, abundantly provide for their subsistence; for, doubtless, they were not doomed to gain their bread with the sweat of their brow.

India alone shows the traces of primitive fecundity: the barrenness of the other parts of the globe has been conquered by industry; therefore the palm of seniority is due to the Indians; which may also be justified from the testimony of Hebrew writers, where it is said, that the Pison, the Tigris, the Ganges, and the Euphrates, have their source in the terrestrial Paradise.

I know that many eminent men in the learned world, such as Messrs. Linnie and Bailly, have placed the origin of mankind in Siberia, from whence they have pretended that

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that by successive emigrations, they have spread over the face of the whole earth.

Among different reasons in support of this assertion, they say it is the only country that naturally produces corn, the first nourishment of civilized society.

This assertion might have some foundation, if corn could be esteemed a necessary food for our subsistence; but it is evident it was not made use of in a state of nature, as it requires previous preparations, which could not then be given. Even in our days the greater part of mankind live without bread; and rice, which is the principal food of the Asiatics, seems more adapted to the primitive race; at the same time, Siberia is not the only country where corn grows without cultivation—a similar phenomenon is seen in Sicily. Neither is the appearance of nitre, from which Mr. Bailliy pretends to draw a proof, in favour of Siberia's being habitable, more con-

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clusive: the mountains of India and Pegu, which, from their form, situation, and precipices, are absolutely uninhabitable, contain more nitre than parts of the world which are fertile, and agreeably situated. In Europe the earth contains as much nitre as there is in Asia, because it is natural to that element; but it does not discover itself without a long and brisk fermentation, which the heat of India facilitates, and the cold seasons in Europe do not permit.

Without pretending to solve this learned question, it is indubitable, that the traces of the most distant antiquity are to be found among the Indians; and that the first sparks of reason ought to shine in those climates; because the intellectual faculties are only unfolded in the silence of philosophical researches. Beside, it is certainly known, that all nations drew from hence the elements of their knowledge, and that Pythagoras quitted Greece to

study

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study under the Brachmans, at that time esteemed the most enlightened of men. Bacchus, Semiramis, Sesostris, Alexander, and many before them, would never have carried their arms into India, if they had not been attracted by the fame of the country. Men do not fly a thousand leagues from their native soil, and sacrifice two hundred thousand of their fellow creatures, to gain an uncultivated and savage nation: beside, long before the æra of those famous conquerors, all nations repaired to India for instruction and riches.

Before Rama propagated his tenets (an epocha which goes back more than 4800 years), the Indians were as learned as they now are; their fables, and sacred writings, are proofs. If we observe the pagodas of Salcette and Yelloura, the petrefactions of Trevicaru, we shall go back to times far distant; and if we consult the Indian traditions, that the sea once washed the foot of the Gauts, who knows

how

how many ages may have elapsed since its retreat ?

The Indians, however, assert, that the mountain Marou, situated in the north, was the habitation of the antient penitents ; which, as Mr. Bailly observes, seems to indicate an emigration from the north to have spread itself over India ; but at what time did they descend from the mountains of Thibet ?

India, in its splendour, gave religion and laws to other nations ; Egypt and Greece are indebted to the Indians both for their fables and their philosophy.

It will, no doubt, create surprise, to behold a nation celebrated in antiquity, fallen into ignorance and contempt ; yet how could it be avoided ; and is not its actual state a necessary consequence of its situation ? An opulent country, where every thing contributes to the desire of mankind, will soon become the bloody theatre of war : such has been the fate of India.

dia. Its annals could not fail of being interesting; but in the impossibility of finding necessary materials for such a work, we are almost always reduced to conjecture. However, to give my readers a just idea of a people so worthy to be known, I have faithfully collected the scattered anecdotes necessary to prove the revolutions they have undergone at different periods. I have principally confined myself to give an account of their religion, manners, actual customs, and sacred writings; because in them, there is every reason to believe their history is allegorically contained.

I am, however, sensible how difficult it is to give an exact and precise account of their religious worship: the ceremonies and particular opinions of each people that inhabit the peninsula on this side the Ganges should be described; but, even then, the work would be imperfect; because the same city, tribe, and people, submitting to the same laws, customs,

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toms, and celebrating the same festivals, differ about the precedence of their gods. I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to catch their ideas, in order to form their history.

They acknowledge in common the same principal deities, and under the same names, such as Brama, Vichenou, and Chiven: they also universally agree in opinion concerning the soul, and the different transmigrations from one body to another; and equally hold sacred the books which are said to contain the principles of their religion.

The errors of all nations are caused by the forgetting of their original language: when it once falls into disuse, the interpreters give it the finishing stroke, and make it unintelligible. In the expositions which the Bramins of each country have made of their original sacred books, they have introduced absurd and ridiculous fables, presuming they would be agreeable to those to whom they were related.

From

From thence arises the difference of opinion on the birth, the action, and names, even of the principal deities ; the great difference of their festivals and ceremonies ; the infinite multitude of inferior gods, demi-gods, and saints ; which, like the sacred animals of Egypt, are celebrated and worshipped in one place, while they are despised or unknown in another.

Notwithstanding this, the Indian sage is no idolator : he disregards the fables related by the Bramins, to amuse the weakness of the people : he adores one universal, supreme and infinite being ; and when he is asked a description, replies without hesitation, “ It is as difficult for me to describe the deity, as it is for you to personify the voice with which you speak, or the sound of a bell : we hear them—in like manner, all nature announces a supreme being, without a possibility of definition, or representation, under a real shape.”

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If, in the present work, I cannot go back to the origin of the Indians, the researches will serve to prove the first progress of the arts and sciences, and the different revolutions they have experienced; they will also prove the influence of these ancient people over their neighbours, and help to the decision of a problem hitherto imagined impossible to be solved, namely, whether the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, &c. received their learning from the Indians, or the Indians from them.

I have to acknowledge my obligations to many well instructed persons, who have assisted my undertaking, and have communicated to me the observations they had made, in those parts where I travelled. It is with pleasure I acknowledge that without the information of Mr. Martin, ancient counsellor of the Indies, and from his unwearied pursuits, during my residence in India, I should have given a very imperfect account of the religion of the Indians.

I was

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I was not less favoured by accidents; I had the pretended translation of the Ezour Vedam, which is in the royal library; I had it read to a learned but enthusiastic Brainin, and as the work did not equal the idea he wished to give me of his religion, he thought himself obliged to unveil its mysteries.

A VOYAGE

MOA 107.1

VOYAGE

TO THE

EAST-INDIES AND CHINA.

BOOK I.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RELIGION OF THE
INDIANS, OR AN ABRIDGEMENT
OF THEIR MYTHOLOGY.

MYTHOLOGY is uninteresting to the majority of readers, as at the first glance it appears only to describe a series of incoherent absurdities, which seem to proceed more from a heated imagination, than an enlightened understanding; yet, however weak we may suppose the human mind, it is still averse to believe, that, in all times and places,

2 SONNERAT's VOYAGES.

it was meant to be trifled with by those monstrous fables, whose only recommendation to be credited arose from their extravagance. More favourable opinions have been given by philosophers who have applied themselves to the study of those fables: they have discovered them to be so many ingenious allegories, under which truth and wisdom reside. This opinion seems to be more peculiarly well founded with respect to the Indians, as their taste for allegory has been long known. It is under this mysterious veil that they have disguised the history of their great men deified, and of those terrible revolutions, of which the globe we inhabit still preserves the marks.

Like the Egyptians, the Greeks, and Romans, they acknowledge an infinity of deities; which, in the principle, forms but one; the others have proceeded from different names given to the divinity. It was soon forgot they belonged to the same being, and from that moment they were consecrated to represent different deities.

The Gentoos have three principal, Brouma,
Chiven,

Chiven, and Vichenou, who are but one ; which kind of trinity is then called Trimourti, or Tritvam, and signifies the re-union of three powers.

This tenet seems to have prevailed universally in India, where they adored but one divinity, who re-united the three attributes—those of creation, preservation, and destruction ; but, in process of time, they personified each attribute, and made three gods, whose distinct powers were expressed in an allegorical manner ; thus, the omnipotence of God was described by the act of creation ; his providence, by that of preservation ; and his justice, by that of destruction.

The generality of Indians adore only one of these three divinities ; but some learned men, beside this worship, also address their prayers to the three united : their representation is to be seen in many pagodas, under that of human figures, with three heads ; which, on the coast of Orixa, they call Sariharabrama ;—Trimourti, on the Coromandel coast ;—and Tretratre-yam, in the Samscroutam dialect. There are

4 SONNERAT's VOYAGES.

even temples entirely consecrated to this kind of trinity; such as that of Parpenade, on the Coromandel coast, in the kingdom of Travancourt, where the three gods are worshipped in the form of a serpent with a thousand heads.

The feast of Anandavourdon, which they celebrate to their honour on the eve of the full moon, in the month of Pretachi, or October, always draws a great number of people; which would not be the case, if those that came were not adorers of the three powers re-united.

Vichenou himself is worshipped under these three attributes, in his temple of Tercovelour, and bears the name of Olegerlanda-Perounal.

ARTICLE I.

BROUMA.

Brouma, notwithstanding he is regarded as God the creator *, has neither temple, wor-

* He is also known by the names of Bruhma, Brahma, Brahma, Birma, Birm, Brema: all these names are written in the same character, and differ only in the pronunciation.

ship, or followers * ; but the Bramins, on account of their origin, address prayers to him every morning, and perform the ceremony of Sandivane to his honour.

Pride was the cause of his disgrace. He persuaded himself he was equal to Chiven, because he had the power of creation : for which reason, he pretended to have the pre-eminence of Vichenou, whom he grievously insulted. The latter would be revenged, and a terrible combat ensued between them ; the stars fell from the firmament ; the Andons [†] burst, and the earth trembled. The Deverkels, struck with fear, shut their eyes ; and, in the excess

* We read in the translation which Mr. de Messin ordered to be made, of the mysteries of the temple of Cheringham, (during the time he commanded in this pagoda, which the French had turned into a fort) that Brama, in former times, had temples the same as Chiven and Vichenou, and was worshipped separately ; but the followers of the two last having made a coalition, entirely destroyed the temples and worship of Brama, in order to confign him to oblivion.

† According to the Indians, the Andon is the visible world :—it is composed of one sun, one earth, planets, and stars ; the whole is surrounded with a round and very thick shell. The Andons are innumerable, and ranged one upon another, very much in the manner of piling eggs,

of their affliction, went to find Devendren, who conducted them to Calaifson*. They prayed the Lord to support them; and God, who is diffused into all souls, as oil is diffused into a grain of gengeli †, felt what the Deverkels suffered. He appeared before the combatants, under the form of a column of fire, which had no end; the sight of this column appeased their anger; and, to terminate their difference, they agreed together, that he who could find the foot or summit of the column, should be acknowledged the superior god.— Vichenou took the form of a wild boar, and with his tusks made holes in the earth, which penetrated as far as Padalon ‡: he traversed a thousand cadons § in the twinkling of an eye; and, during a thousand years, he searched in this manner, without finding the foot of the column. At length, quite tired, he returned, but did not reach the place from whence he

old * Calaifson, the paradise of Chiven.

† Gengeli, a small grain, from which oil, in India, is extracted.

‡ Padalon, a country lower than the earth.

§ Three leagues make a cadon.

departed, without much difficulty: then acknowledging the power of the Almighty, he addressed his prayers to him.

Brouma was not more fortunate in his search after the suninit:—he assumed the figure of a bird called Annon*, and, in an instant, raised himself two thousand cadens in the air. In this manner, he unsuccessfully flew for a hundred thousand years; when, finding his strength failing, and not able to fly any more, he reflected on his imprudence, and acknowledged the Lord. God, to prove him, let fall the flower of Caldeir †; Brouma received it in his hands, and as the flower had the faculty of speaking, it desired Brouma to give it its liberty. Brouma wished the flower should accompany him to Vichenou, in order to prove he had seen the head of the column; and he actually had the imprudence to maintain it to Vichenou, saying, that the flower of Caldeir,

* A kind of swan, on which Brouma rides.

† Caldeir;—this tree is known in the Isle of France by the name of Vaqueois. M. De Buffon calls it the Arbre Indecent, by reason of some roots, resembling the membrum virile, which project from the trunk.

which

which he brought, was a witness. The flower answered only, "Yes;" but before the word was out of its mouth, the column burst, the Achtequedjams * vomited blood, and the clouds were burnt. God appeared in the midst of the column, and gave a smile like that which he gave when he destroyed the Tirobourons †: then Vichenou cast himself at his feet, and gave praises unto the Lord: Chiven, touched with his repentance, pardoned him his fault, and bestowed upon him several varrons ‡.

Brouma became immovable; Chiven cursed him, and assured him, that because he had lied, he should never have temples on the earth, nor poutche ||; and as for the flower of Cal-

* They are eight elephants, that support the world.

† Three forts of gold, silver, and iron, where the Ac-kourers, who plagued the Deverkels, resided. One smile of Chiven reduced these three forts to ashes.

‡ Varrons, particular favours.

|| Poutche, ceremonies which men are obliged to make daily to the gods. *Vide, Particular Ceremonies of the Gentoos, l. 3, c. 6.*

deir,

deir, he told him, it should never be used in his temples *.

Brouma recovering, sincerely repented, and cast himself at Chiven's feet, imploring his mercy. As the goodness of God is infinite, Chiven had pity on the penitent, and pardoned him: "Your pride", said he, "has made you lose the poutche; but, as a favour, in consequence of your repentance, the ceremonies of the Bramins shall be devoted to you." In pronouncing these last words, he disappeared.

It is in memory of this transformation of Chiven, that the Indians celebrate the famous feast of Paornomi, in the temple of Tirounamaley.

Brouma espoused Sarasouadi, goddess of the sciences, and harmony †. She was born in

C the

* The Caldeir is used by the Indians in all the ceremonies made in honour of Pollear, Soupramanier, and Vichenou, but never in those of Chiven.

† Some historians, who have wrote on the Indian mythology and its origin, have supposed Brama and Sarasouadi were the same as Abraham the Patriarch, and his wife Sarah.

They

the sea of milk, while the Deverkels, and the Achourers were getting the amourdon out of it. She is also the goddess of languages: they invoke her to make children speak, and do the same in the schools, when they learn to read and to write; but she has no temple. They represent her holding an Indian book in one hand, and playing on an instrument, which they call Kinneri:—one is the emblem of science, and the other of harmony.

This fable seems to describe the total destruction of the sect of Brouma. We have already said, that the destruction of this sect was the cause of the re-union of those of Chiven and Vichenou: it is in commemoration of this event, that in some temples, where they worship the divinity under the name of Sangara Naraienn, which means Chiven and Viche-

They have been led to believe this, not only from the resemblance of the name of Abraham to that of Brahma, but by the true signification of that of Sarasouadi, the termination of Souadi being only to mark the feminine, as if we were to say, Mrs. Sarah. I should think a definition so vague as a resemblance of names, is not much to be credited, Brahma being more ancient in the Indian History, than Abraham is in Genesis.

nou,

nou, that the deity is represented half white, and half blue, to express the re-union of these gods, who make only one. However, as those Broumanists who escaped the general massacre entered into the sect of Chiven, they have feigned that Brouma had repented.

Brouma was the first legislator of the Indians. He drew them from their savage state, to teach them the arts, sciences, and agriculture. It is for this reason he is deified, and regarded as creator, and that they feigned he had espoused the goddes of the sciences.

He is represented with four arms, and four heads, which, according to some Indians, are emblems of the four sacred books, known by the name of the Vedams. In one hand he holds a circle, which signifies immortality; and in the other hand, fire, which represents power: and, lastly, with the third and fourth, he writes on Olles*, or Indian books, which is a symbol of the legislative power.

* Olla means the leaf of a kind of palm tree, on which the Indians write.

ARTICLE II.

VICHENOU.

Vichenou is esteemed god the preserver*, He espoused Latchimi, goddess of riches †, who was also born in the sea of milk ; and Boumidevi, goddess of the earth. He had by Latchimi, Manmadin god of love, whom the Indians rank among the gods, for no other reason than their taste for voluptuousness.

Manmadin ‡ differs but little from our Cupid. He is drawn like him, under the figure of a child, carrying a quiver on his shoulders, and holding a bow and arrows in his hand : but the bow of Manmadin is of sugar-cane, the

* He is also known by the names of Visnou, Vistenow, Vichnum, Bistenou. In some temples he is worshipped under the names of Jagrenat, and Quichena ; in others, under that of Paroudon, Bouda, Narainem, Peroumal, Moeni, Mogueni, and Addissecheen. Some authors call him Beschon, and Bistuoo.

† Latchimi is esteemed, by the followers of Vichenou, as mother of the world : she is reported to be of perfect beauty

‡ Man, signifies heart, desire. — Mada, which gnaws, which excites love. He is also called Amanga, which means a man without a heart.

arrows made of all sorts of flowers, and he is mounted on a paroquet. Although an infant, they have given him a wife named Radi *. The Indians represent her as a beautiful woman on her knees on horseback, and throwing a dart. She partakes of the functions of her husband; but neither of them have temples. Their figures are cut in bas relief, on the walls of those of Vichenou: but their statues are never seen separate.

Vichenou had, beside, two daughters by Latchimi, called Chondaravali, and Amourdavali, who both married Soupramanir, under the name of Teyavane, and Valinayaqui. He had another son, of which he himself was delivered during his metamorphosis into a woman, under the name of Moyeni; a form which he assumed to seduce the giants, and take the amourdon † from them, which they had got out of the sea of milk with the Deverkels. Chiven was so struck with her

* Radi signifies debauch.

† Amourdon, a liquor which procures immortality: it is also called amortam, amortam, ambrosia, and nectar.

beauty, that he could not resist his desires, and became, with her, the father of Ayenar*. The Gentoos esteem this son of Chiven and Vichenou as the protector of the world, of good order, and of the police: but they do not rank him with gods of the first class. They build small temples to him in the woods, commonly at a distance from the highway, but never in towns. He is known by the quantity of horses made of dried earth, which they consecrate to him; and are placed without outside the temple, but under cover. It is not permitted to pass near those temples in a carriage, on horseback, or on foot, with shoes on †. He is the only god to whom sanguinary offerings are made; kids, and cocks being sacrificed to him.

They count twenty-one incarnations of Vichenou, of which there are nine principal.

* Ayenar: he is also called Ariarapoutren.

† This subjection is, no doubt, the reason why his temples are removed out of the way, in desarts, and unfrequented places; for, in reading this mythology, we must never lose sight of a principle, which it has in common with all other nations, that is, constantly to seek for reasons, or natural causes, in religious customs.

It is to these nine only that temples are erected; the others, being but one part of the deity, are esteemed as accidental; and the sacred books that treat of his praises, give an account of these last nine alone.

The first incarnation was that of a fish, to preserve king Sattiaviraden, and his wife from the deluge. During the period of this revolution, which lasted to the end of the third age, Vichenou was their protector, under the form of a fish, and served as rudder to the boat he had sent them. When the waters were retired, Sattiaviraden descended on the earth, and employed himself wholly in re-peopling it. In this transformation they adore Vichenou under the name of Matchia Vataram*. Under this

* Matchia Vataram. All nations have preserved the tradition of the deluge. The Christians say, it happened in the year of the world one thousand six hundred and fifty-six; the latter Indians date it, four thousand eight hundred and eighty-three; and the Chinese, four thousand. Ancient history mentions a deluge, which over-flowed all Thessaly, and happened in Grece during the time of Deucalion, in the year of the world two thousand four hundred and forty eight. That of Ogygia, in Attica, is more ancient than the last, by two hundred

this form he destroyed the giant Canagacchen*, who had taken the Four Vedams from Brouma, and had swallowed them. Vichenou, after having vanquished the giant, opened his belly to take them out; but he found three only, the fourth being digested.

The second incarnation was that of a tortoise. The gods and the giants desiring to procure themselves immortality, after the counsel of Vichenou, transported the mountain of Mandriguiri into the sea of milk, to get the Amourdon; they surrounded it with the serpent Addislechen, and drawing it alternately, some by the head, and some by the tail, they turned the mountain topsy turvy, that they might change the sea into butter. They drew

hundred and forty years. Besides, we discover, that the greatest part of the ceremonies of different nations, as Mr. Boulanger has well observed, have relation to this almost universal swelling of the waters; and each country, physically examined, shews traces of a general overturning of nature. All nations have had their Deucalion; and the species of black men and white, so different from each other, seem to denote, that they could never have had one common father, and that men have survived the deluge in different countries.

* He has been called, by some authors, Calakegen and Aycriben.

it with such swiftness, that Addissechen, overcome with weariness, could no longer support the fatigue; his body trembled, his thousand shivering mouths made the earth resound with his hissings; a torrent of flame issued from his eyes; his thousand tongues, black and hanging, palpitated; and he vomited a terrible poison, which in an instant spread itself every where: Vichenou, more intrepid than the other gods and giants who fled, took the poison, and rubbed his body with it, which immediately became blue. It is in commemoration of this event, that in almost all the temples dedicated to him, they represent him of a blue colour. The gods and the giants returned to their work; they laboured during a thousand years, after which the mountain sunk by degrees into the sea.

Vichenou then took the form of a tortoise, of an extraordinary size, went into the sea, and easily lifted up the sunk mountain: all the gods, after having given him praises, united to turn the mountain. At last, after many ages,

the cow Camadenou* came out of the sea of milk, as also the horse Outchifaravam, the white elephant Ariapadam†, and the tree Calpaga Vroucham; their labours also produced three goddesses—Latchirni, goddess of riches, wife of Vichenou; Sarasouadi, goddess of sciences and harmony, whom Brouma took to his wife; and Moudevi, goddess of discord and misfortune, with whom, for good reason, no person would trouble themselves; for the Indians suppose, that whoever is under her influence will never have a grain of rice, to appease his hunger: she is represented green, mounted on an ass, carrying a banner in her hand, in the middle of which a raven is painted; those animals are given her as attributes, because they are held infamous by the Gentoos.

The

* Camadenou signifies the desirable cow; she gives all the nourishment that can be wished for; her picture is placed in the temples of Vichenou, where she is represented with wings, having the head of a woman, three tails, and a little calf, which she suckles.

† Airapadam is one of the elephants who support the earth. They place his image in the temples of Vichenou, where he

The physician Danouvandri * afterwards came out from the bottom of the sea, with a vase full of amourdon; Vichenou distributed it amongst the gods alone; and the giants, who saw themselves disappointed, furious, for having been deceived, dispersed themselves over the earth, preventing homage being paid to any deity whatever, and exercised all kinds of cruelty, to make themselves adored: their insolence occasioned the following metamorphosis of Vichenou, who would destroy this race of enemies to the gods†: in this transformation he is worshipped by the name of Courma Valaram.

is represented of a white colour, having four tusks, and his body loaded with trinkets, and magnificently dressed.

* Danouvandri is esteemed a transformation of Vichenou; but accidental, and momentary; being only a part of himself. No temples are built to him; his picture, only, is placed in that of Vichenou, where he is represented as a learned man, reading.

† In all mythologies we perceive giants armed against the gods. In fabulous history, Jupiter thunders at the Titans. Some authors have imagined, that these rude and fabulous images, were only copied from the famous revolt of the angels against God Almighty, and of their dreadfull fall into hell.

In this fable is evidently seen the analogy of the Indian mythology with that of other nations. Is not the earth saved from the waters of the deluge, figured by the mountain Mandreguiri, which Vichenou supported, under the form of a tortoise?—The Typhon of the Egyptians coming out of the lake Sarbonide, and destroying every thing by his poisonous breath, is it any thing else than the venom of the serpent Addissechen?—is not the amourdon, ambrosia? and, finally, the goddess Latchimi, daughter of the sea of milk, is she not the Venus Aphrodites of the Greeks, as much as that Venus, which Hesiod and the divine Homer relate, sprung from the sea, ascended to Olympus, and captivated all the gods?

Vichenou was obliged to perform a third incarnation, to destroy the giant Erimacchaf-sen, who employed his time in overthrowing the earth, after having done every kind of mischief to its creatures: God, the preserver, took the form of a wild boar, attacked the giant, and ripped up his belly; he then plunged into the sea, to draw out the earth: he took

it up with his tusks, and rested it on the surface of the water, as it was before, placing several mountains about it, to keep it in equilibrium. In this transformation he is worshipped under the name of Varaguen; but at Tiromuton, where this deity has a famous temple dedicated to this incarnation, he is worshipped under the name of Adivarague Perounal. In order to destroy the giant Erenien, Vichenou incarnated himself a fourth time, and appeared half man, and half lion: this giant, abusing the privilege he had obtained from Brouma—which was, that neither gods, men, or animals, should have power to kill him—made himself to be acknowledged god throughout his kingdom. His son, Pragaladen, filled with the grace of Vichenou, was the only person who refused to adore him; neither caresses, menaces, or torments, could induce him; he courageously told his father, that the god whom he worshipped was almighty, full of goodness to his worshippers, and terrible to the wicked. Erenien replied, he should be glad to know where the almighty

mighty deity was, that he might wreak his vengeance upon him? Pragaladen answered, that he was omnipotent, and filled all places with his divinity: " Shall I find him here?" cried Erenien, in a passion, striking with his hands one of the pillars of his palace; at these words, the pillar split in two, and Vichenou appeared, with the head of a lion, and the body of a man; a figure of which Erenien did not dream, when he asked of Brouma that he might not receive his death either from the hand of gods, or men, nor from the tusks of animals. He sustained a terrible combat against Vichenou, who ripped up his belly, and drank all his blood. In this metamorphosis he is worshipped under the name of Narasima Vataram. He has had famous temples dedicated to this incarnation; one at Archiouac, a village, a league from Pondicherry; and another at Ahoblon, on the coast of Orixa.

The fifth incarnation was in a Bramin dwarf, under the name of Vamen; it was wrought to restrain the pride of the giant Bely. The latter, after having conquered the gods, expelled them from

from Sorgon ; he was generous, true to his word, compassionate, and charitable. Vichenou, under the form of a very little Bramin, presented himself before him, while he was sacrificing, and asked him for three paces of land to build a hut. Bely ridiculed the apparent imbecility of the dwarf, in telling him, that he ought not to limit his demand to a bequest so trifling ; that his generosity could bestow a much larger donation of land. Vamen answered, that being of so small a stature, what he asked was more than sufficient. The prince immediately granted his request, and to ratify his donation, poured water into his right hand *, which was no sooner done, than the dwarf grew so prodigiously, that his body filled the universe ! He measured the earth with one pace—and the heavens with another—and then summoned Bely to give him his word for the third. The prince then recognised Vichenou, adored him, and pre-

* This custom yet prevails in India. An Indian cannot make a present of any thing to a Bramin, without pouring water into his hands ; he does not even give him beetle without this ceremony.

sented his head to him ; but the God, satisfied with his submission, sent him to govern the Pandalon, and permitted him to return every year to the earth, the day of the full moon, in the month of November *.

The sixth incarnation was in the form of a man, under the name of Rama, to destroy the giant Ravenan, king of the Island of Ceylon, who caused himself to be worshipped as a divinity.

In this incarnation, Vichenou was born of Deffaradan, king of Ayodi, which, I believe, is Siam. At fifteen years of age he quitted his paternal house, and became a penitent, carrying with him his wife, Side, and Latchoumanen, his brother. He arrived on the banks of the Ganges, which he crossed, in order to go on the top of the mountain Sitrecondon, where he instructed his disciples, and taught them the doctrine of the Metempsychosis ; he afterwards went through the deserts of Endagarenion, where he stayed ten years, making proselytes, and rendering ser-

* Vide l. iii. c. v. of the Indian feasts.

VICES

vices to the penitents who were retired there. After having entirely delivered them from the giants and giantesses, who ill-treated them, and molested their sacrifices and prayers, he retired into the desert Pangiavadi, and built a hut, to finish his penance.

Puffed up with the great number of his proselytes, he wished to extend his doctrine as far as Ceylon: Ravanen, king of that isle, and powerful in his government, imagined, that with a numerous army he had nothing to fear from Rama.

He vanquished him several times, and took his wife, Side, from him; but Rama, spurred on by the desire of revenge, gained over Vibouchanen, brother of the giant, by promising to place him on the throne. This promise was not without effect; Vibouchanen served as pilot to Rama, and helped him to conquer his brother. The combat was furious. At last Ravanen perished by a lance which Rama threw at him, and which he had received from Brouma.

The penitents immediately surrounded Rama, sung his praises, and threw flowers upon him.

According to his promise, he crowned Vichuanen, who worshipped him : and after having recovered his wife, he returned to his country, and mounted the throne of his father Desseradden, which he filled during eleven thousand years, and then resigned the crown to his two sons, Couffen, and Lavan ; and went with Side into the Vaicondon *, where he reigns, and from whence he preserves the universe.

In the temples dedicated to this incarnation, they represent Vichenou of a green colour, under the figure of a young man of perfect beauty, with a bow and arrows in his hands : Anoumar † is beside him, waiting his orders. They also have the picture of the giant with ten heads, painted blue, and twenty arms, holding in each hand different weapons, emblems of his strength and power.

The history of Rama forms a large volume, full of excellent reflections : the Indians are very fond of it, as they say it teaches them

* Paradise of Vichenou.

† Minister to the king of apes.

every

every thing. They take so much pleasure in the reading, that even the followers of Chiven study and repeat it by heart.

The seventh incarnation was also in the form of a man, under the name of Balapatren.

In this incarnation, Balapatren was ignorant that he was a part of Vichenou. He lived in solitude and penance, confining himself to destroy, without eclat, the wicked who came in his way. He purged the earth of many giants, among whom Vroutrassourer is distinguished, who by his cruelties forced men to deify him, and to present him the offerings and sacrifices destined for the gods. This is all that the Indians on the Coromandel coast know of the history of Balapatren. They only conjecture that one of the Pouranons, which are not yet translated into the Tamour language, contains the detail of his life. He is represented holding a plough-share.

The eighth incarnation was likewise in the form of a man, under the name of Parassourama, to teach mankind the practice of virtue, and to detach them from the goods of this world.

Paraffourama was also only one part of Vichenou. He declared war against the kings of the race of the sun. He defeated them all, and gave their kingdom to the Bramins. He would afterwards have retired into a corner of the country he had presented them, to pass his days in tranquility ; but none of the Bramins would permit him : and finding no asylum on the earth, he retired on the Gauts, whose foundation was washed by the waves. It was there that he called Varounin, god of the sea, begging him to withdraw his waters, in order to give him a place he could inhabit : he only desired the space of an arrow's flight, which he would shoot. Varounin consented ; but the penitent Narader, witness of the promise he had just given, made him sensible of his imprudence, by assuring him, that it was Vichenou himself, and that he would throw his arrow beyond all the seas ; in which case, Varounin would not know what to do with his waters. Varounin, lamenting at not being able to recal his promise, ran speedily to the god of death, begging his assistance in this conjuncture. To oblige him, the god of death changed

changed himself into a white ant, called *karta* among the Indians, who, in the night time, came when Parassourama was asleep, and, by the favour of the darkness, gnawed his bow-string in such a manner, as to leave just string enough to keep the bow stretched.

Parassourama, not perceiving the trick played him, repaired in the morning to the sea shore; he put an arrow to his bow, which he was preparing to shoot with all his strength; but in drawing the string, to give it more elasticity, it broke in such a manner, that the arrow could not go far. The land over which it passed, dried, and formed the country of Malealon, which we call the coast of Malabar. Parassourama, recalling to mind the ingratitude of the Bramins, cursed them, and imposed this lot upon them, that if a Bramin should die on this new spot of earth, he should return to earth again, under the figure of an ass: therefore no Bramin's residence is to be seen on this proscribed coast.

According to the Tamoul tradition, this god still lives on the Malabar coast. They represent him a terrible and disagreeable figure.

On

On the Coromandel coast he is painted green, with a more agreeable countenance, holding in one hand a hatchet, and a fan of palm leaves in the other.

It is to be presumed by this fable, that the Indians meant to inform their successors, that the sea once washed the foot of the Gauts; which would prove that this nation dates from the most early antiquity.

The ninth incarnation of Vichenou was that of a black shepherd, under the name of Quichena *, to destroy cruel and wicked kings, who made their subjects miserable. He was born of Devegui, sister to Canjen, king of Madura: this prince, to whom it had been foretold, that the ninth child of his sister would destroy him, took great care that her children should perish, as soon as they were born. Already seven had been sacrificed, and the vigilance was increased, to watch the birth of the eighth; but Vichenou accomplished his design, in ordering Mayé to be born the

* He is also known by the names of Crisnen, Critten, and Crixnou: all these names, in different idioms, signify black.

daughter

daughter of Assouadi *, and of Nandagoben, chief of the shepherds of the village of Gocoulam. Vichenou was born at the same moment, and with such glory, that his mother knew him to be the Lord. He was scarcely in the world, when he had the faculty of speaking; he told Mayé to order him to be carried immediately to Assouadi, wife of the chief of the shepherds of the village of Gocoulam, and to substitute in his place the peasant's daughter, that by this means he might escape the fury of Canjen.

Among the guards whom this prince had placed about his sister, Dondoubi, full of devotion for Vichenou, found himself to be the only person on watch; he took the infant, ran and laid it by the side of Assouadi, who had not yet recovered the use of her senses; he put it in the place of her little daughter, whom he quickly carried back to Devegui. Canjen, informed that his sister was brought to bed, came to her apartment in the utmost fury. In vain did she intreat him not to destroy a se-

* This name is expressive of every thing that is false and
male,

male, whom he could not have the least reason to fear; her tears had no effect; he snatched the child from her arms, seizing it by the feet, in order to dash its brains out against a stone; but the infant overthrew him, with a kick in the stomach, and appeared in the air, in the form of a great goddess with eight arms. She then disappeared, telling him that his nephew was Vichenou himself, who was incarnated on purpose to destroy him, and that all search after him would be in vain, as he was carried to a place of safety.

Canjen, tormented by his thoughts and reveries, imagined he continually saw the figure of Vichenou ready to destroy him. After having searched over the whole kingdom, without effect, he ordered all the male children to be massacred; but Assouadi concealed Quichena so well, and whom she believed to be her own child, that he was not involved in the general destruction. The employment of his first years was to tend the herds. He excelled in the innocent amusements of a pastoral life. The harmonious sounds of his flute drew all the animals round him, and was the chief delight

of

of the shepherds and shepherdesses; his delivering them from the serpent Calengam, who lived in the river Yomounadi, completed their esteem for him. This monster was so venomous, that the wind which touched him, or blew over the place where he was, killed whatever met the blast. Quichena jumped into the river to attack him; the serpent darted upon him, encircled him with his long folds, and would have strangled him, but he easily extricated himself: after which, having taken him by the tail, he put his feet on his head and crushed him.

It is in cominemoration of this event, that in the temples of Vichenou, consecrated to this incarnation, that Quichena is represented with his body twined round by a Couvre Capelle, who bites his foot; while in other pictures, he is painted dancing on the head of the same serpent. His followers have commonly both these portraits in their houses.

Quichena, in the sequel, abandoned himself to bebauchery, and was an example of libertinism. He destroyed the giants whom Canjen sent, under different forms, to massacre

all the youth of the kingdom. So many victories made him respected, and attached many friends to him, who imitated him in his debaucheries. When he found he had a considerable party, he marched against Canjen, defeated and slew him: some little time after he married seven wives, and had besides sixteen thousand concubines.

During his reign, he supported and assisted Darma Raja, as well as many other virtuous kings. Tyrannical princes and giants fell before him. At length, perceiving the fourth age approaching, and not willing to survive the third, already marked by misfortune, he caused a huntsman to slay him. Darma Raja erected a funeral pile on the sea-shore to burn his body; but, in dying, he had ordered the sea to carry him off before the flames had consumed him: so that, as soon as he was placed on the pile, the waters of the sea arose and carried him off. Paritchitou, successor and nephew to Darma Raja, saw Vichenou in a dream, who thus spoke to him, “ Go to the sea-shore, you will there find my body, which

you

you will transport and shut up in the temple during six months; after that time you may shew it to all the world and adore it.

Paritchitou, followed by a numerous train, and numbers of Bramins, actually went to the sea-shore, where he found the body of Quichena. He caused it to be carried in great pomp, and shut up in a temple; but incited by an indiscreet curiosity, he would see it at the end of three months, and found it changed into a stone: he immediately made it a divinity, to whom he offered his adorations. This same body is yet adored by the Indians on the coast of Orixa, in a village called Chenaguanaden, but known to us by the name of Jaggernat, and is one of the places which is held in the greatest reverence. The Indians believe they cannot be saved, without having made a pilgrimage there at least once in their lives; which every year brings an innumerable concourse of people, during the time of the feast of the dedication of the temple.

The same fable is to be found in the book improperly called the Ezour Vedam, which M. de Voltaire presented to the king's library;

but it is there related, that instead of the body of Quichena, the god manifested himself, under the form of a trunk of a tree, which the sea flung on the shore, and that Indroduomeno, one of the first kings on the coast of Orixa, took it to make a figure of Vichenou, destined for a magnificent temple he had just built to his honour; that the workman employed to carve it promised to finish it in a night, upon condition that no person should see him at work, or else he should leave it: the prince consented. As the artist made no noise at his work, the prince thought he had left it; to convince himself, he looked through a hole; the sculptor perceiving him, immediately went away, and left the work unfinished. This, however, did not prevent the king from placing the rough sketch in the temple, to worship and offer it sacrifices.

The Indians date the present age from the death of Quichena; and I am fully persuaded, that a learned person, who might be sent to make enquiries concerning the antiquity of these people, would find their origin in the temple of Jaggernaut.

Quichena

Quichena seems to be the same as Apollo, keeping the sheep of Admetus, and destroying the serpent Python. The Indians celebrate many feasts in commemoration of Quichena's triumph over the serpent Calengam, which may be compared to the Pythian games, instituted by Apollo, among the Greeks. The same affinity may be found between Canjen and Saturn.

The tenth incarnation is not to happen until the end of this age: Vichenou will then appear on the earth, in the form of a horse, holding a sabre in one hand, and a buckler in the other. Under this terrible figure, he will destroy the wicked; the sun and moon will be darkened; the earth will tremble, and the stars fall from the firmament; the serpent Addisfechen will vomit his fire, which will burn all the globes, and all creatures shall perish *. Although the followers of Vichenou believe that

their

* Almost all nations have lived in expectation of the coming of a god. The Romans expected a king, foretold by the Sibyls. The oracle of Delphos was the depository of an ancient

their god is omnipresent, they believe he more particularly resides in the Vaicondon, and in the middle of the sea of milk*, on the serpent Addisfechen †, who serves him for a throne, and on whom he takes a contemplative repose. He is then called Siranguam Rangua Nayaguar. In all the temples of Vichenou the figure of the god is seen lying on this serpent ; but as it is impossible to represent Addisfechen with a thousand heads, they give him only five.

In many temples, Vichenou is represented with four arms, holding in one hand a fan-

cient and secret prophecy, on the birth of a son of Apollo, who is to bring again the kingdom of justice. The Persians are in expectation at the end of the ages, of Ali ; the Chinese, of Phele ; the Japanese, of Pecium and Cambadori ; the Siamese, of Sammoncoden ; and the Christians, of a destroying angel, &c.

* The Indians reckon seven different seas ; the sea of salt ; of butter ; of tain, or curdled milk ; of calou, a drink drawn from the palm tree ; of the serpent ; of water ; and of milk, which they call tirouparcadel.

† A serpent with a thousand heads, who supports the universe ; he is also known by the name of Sexen, and some authors call him Seja.

gou,

gou*, in another a chacran †, in a third, a dandaidon ‡, and, with the fourth, making a beaston §: by his side they place Latchemi, his wife. In other temples they represent him mounted on Anoumar ||, minister of the king of apes, who assisted him in his incarnation, under the name of Rama; sometimes also on Gueroudin, the Indian kite, which they always paint on the arms and standard of Vichenou; this is the eagle of Pondicherry, the Brisson: the Europeans call it the Miote; the head and neck is white, the rest of the body reddish. In certain temples, as at Tiricatchicondon, the Bramins feed them, and have accustomed them to come for their food at

* A shell, called changu, on the Coromandel coast.

† A weapon, in the form of a circle, that continually vomits fire, and by the force of prayers which Vichenou recites in throwing it, has the power to traverse the earth, and the heavens, and to destroy all his enemies.

‡ A club, which constantly tapers off the side on which the god holds it.

§ Making a sign of protection, with the hand, as much as to say, fear not.

|| Some authors call him Hanman, Hanuman, and Annemonta.

stated

stated hours; they call them by the noise of two copper plates beat against each other. The Indians have great veneration for these birds, whom they esteem as the carriers of Vichenou: this, added to his history, under the name of Quichena, seems to approach the god Jupiter, of the ancients *.

Before the history of Vichenou is finished, I cannot dispense with myself from mentioning the stone of Salagraman; it is nothing but a petrified shell, of the species of cornes d'ammon: the Indians suppose it represents Vichenou, because they discover nine different shades, which refer to the nine incarnations of that god. It is found in the river of Cachi, one of the arms of the Ganges; it is very heavy, commonly of a black colour, and sometimes violet; the form is oval or round,

* What most surprised me, in examining the antiquities of France, were two bas reliefs, placed at the entrance of the choir of the cathedral of Bourdeaux; one represents the ascension of our Saviour, and the other his descent into hell. In the first, Jesus Christ ascends to heaven on an eagle; in the second, Cerberus stops him at the gates of hell, and Pluto appears far off, armed with a trident.

a little

SONNERAT'S VOYAGES. 4

a little flat, and nearly resembles a touch-stone, and is hollow in the inside; there is only a small hole on the outside, but within it is almost concave; and furnished in the interior coats above and below with spiral lines, which terminate in a point towards the middle, and in many these two points touch.

Some Indians imagine it is a small worm which works upon the stone in this manner, to prepare a habitation for Vichenou. Others have found, in these spiral lines, the figure of his Chacran.

These stones are very rare, and the Bramins fix a great value on them, when they represent the gracious transformations of Vichenou; but when they border a little on the violet, they denote his incarnation in the form of a man, a lion, a wild boar, &c.

When that is the case, no follower of this god dares to keep them in his house; the Saniaffis alone are bold enough to carry them, and to make daily ceremonies to them. They are kept also in the temples.

This stone is to the followers of Vichenou, what the Lingam is to those of Chiven: the

SONNERAT'S VOYAGES.

ceremonies made to them are nearly the same, Whoever possesses one, carries it always in a very white linen; after having bathed in the morning, he washes it in a copper vase, and addresses some prayers to it. The Bramins, after washing it, place it on the altar, and perfume it, while the assistants make their adorations; then they distribute a little of the water which has touched it, that they may be purified by the drinking of it.

ARTICLE III.

CHIVEN.

Chiven is god the destroyer*. The Indians of his sect will not allow of his having a rival; and, as they acknowledge but one God, Brouma and Vichenou appear to them as creatures, before the sublimity of Chiven.

Parvadi,

* He is also known by the names of Siven, Siva, Tschiven, Tiven, Xiven, Sib, Seib, Chib; in some temples he is adored by the names Routren, Roudren, Roudra, Rudden, and Ruddiren; of Mayefouren, Iscouren, Issouren, Eswara, Elavara, Mahadeu, and of Sangara. The antients had

Parvadi*, who is given him for a wife, is only one part of himself; or rather it is he alone who re-unites both sexes, to show he is of neither. In these two forms he is adored by the name of Parachiven and Parasati: in some temples these two figures are separate, but in others they are joined together, and are one figure, half man, half woman; to which

the same custom of giving many names to their deities; the more names a divinity had, the greater personage he appeared. It is for this reason, Diana, in Callimaeus, says to her father, " Ordain that I eternally keep my virginity and numerous names." Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, Mercury, and many others, had also different names. The priests of Baal cried continually during half the day, " Baal hear us!" it is probable they gave him many names, to avoid constantly repeating the same words.

* Parvadi has no particular temples, but her statue has a sanctuary apart, in the temples of Chiven. She is worshipped by different names, particularly by that of Mire; and, in Bengal, by that of Dourga. She seems to be the same as the divinity of Hieropolis, called Rhea; and Cybele in Phrygia. The Indians represent her in like manner, crowned with towers, and esteem her the protectress of the earth and its beings, or the goddess of providence; which agrees with the idea formed of Rhea, who is called the mother of gods and men,

the name of Arta Narissoura is given*. The principal temple where Chiven is worshipped, under this form, is at Tirounamaley.

Some Indian philosophers suppose, that Parachiven and Parasate are two perfect beings, superior to Chiven; whom, by their omnipotence, they produced, as well as Vichenou and Brouina; but, as the sacred books do not mention this circumstance, and that these two perfect beings are in the temples of Chiven, and represented under his figure and with his attributes, they ought to be regarded as the same deity.

The Lingam is the most sacred form under which Chiven is worshipped, and it is always placed in the sanctuary of his temples. It is probable that the Indians who first formed this sect, imagined that it could not be more effectually propagated, than by representing the deity under the form of a part which is the instrument of re-production of the human species.

* Arta means half; Nari, woman; and Issoura, is one of Chiven's names.

The sacred books inform us, that it is a giant called Vanajouren, a son of the famous Bely, who not being able to form an idea of this god, chose the figure already mentioned, to offer his adorations. He fasted till he had said his prayers to a thousand Lingams, which he made himself, every day, with earth; and then flung them into the Ganges, on whose banks he performed his penance. The Indians imagine they are petrified; and as stones sometimes are found of this form, they believe them to be the Lingams of Vanajouren: the Indian who can find one, places it on a pedestal; but it has no virtue till the Bramin, by certain prayers, has obliged the deity to incorporate with it: the same Bramin teaches the possessor of this treasure the daily worship he ought to pay. If he passes a single day without addressing his prayers to it, or performing the usual ceremonies, he would commit an unpardonable sin. However, in case of sickness, the ceremonies may be performed for him, by any other person who is in possession of a Lingam.

30. *Alam odi omi au nimbh aod yam i rov. The
mudc "*

The followers of Vichenou give another origin to the Lingam; they say that the penitents had obtained great powers, by their prayers and sacrifices; but in order to preserve them, it was necessary that their hearts, and also those of their wives, should remain always pure. Chiven, having heard of the beauty of their women, wanted to seduce them: he took the form of a young beggar, of exquisite beauty; and made Vichenou take that of a handsome young girl. He then ordered him to go among the penitents, and inspire them with a passion for him.

Vichenou went effectually, and passing by them, cast such languishing glances as inflamed them all. They left their sacrifices, to run after this young beauty, as a moth flutters round a light during the night-time: their passion was expressed in every motion: they asked where she lived—whether on earth, or in the Sorgon? "Was it for your sake," said they, "that the Achourers mutually sacrificed each other? We are ignorant what motives brought you here; yet, whatever it may be, admit us into the rank of your

"your servants." Their languishing bodies seemed infinite, like wax, which melts on the approach of fire.

Chiven, on his part, holding a vase in his hand, and singing as those do who ask alms, repaired to the women's abode. His voice made such an impression on them, that they all ran into the street, where the countenance of the singer completely turned their heads: some were so affected, that they dropped their joys and clothes, and followed him, without perceiving they were naked. Others, wanting to give him rice, became so absent on approaching him, that they let it fall to the ground. Many strove to speak to him, and, as he would not answer, cried out in spite to their comrades, not to give him alms. "You have a form so perfectly charming, (said others to him) why do you beg charity from door to door & fix your residence with us, and you will be a thousand times happier." Women, as beautiful as Latchemi, carrying flowers and perfumes, pulverised, flung them in such quantities at his feet, that the streets were entirely covered. After hav-

ing

ing traversed the village, he left it, but not alone, for all the women followed him to a neighbouring wood, where he obtained his desires.

The penitents perceiving their sacrifices had no more the same effects, and that their powers were no more the same, after some moments recollection *, found out it was Chiven, who, under the form of a young man, had put the women into such confusion ; and that Vichenu had led them astray, under that of a young woman. Their anger increased when they learned it was Chiven who engaged the latter to seduce them, and they resolved to destroy him by a sacrifice.

They accordingly made one, which, however, could not be of any effect, without Chiven's partaking of it. This sacrifice produced first a tyger, whose throat resembled the cavern of a mountain ; his roaring, the sound of thunder ; and burning flames flashed from

* We read in the sacred books of the Indians, that when the penitents and Deverkels want to know any thing, they recollect themselves for a moment, when the past presents itself to their imagination, and they see what is to come.

his

his eyes. The penitents prostrated themselves at his feet, and prayed him to destroy Chiven : but Chiven, after having flayed him, clothed himself with the skin. The sacrifice next produced a Majou, which they sent against the god, who took it in his hand ; as also a stag, who bounded towards him, by order of the penitents, crying in such a manner as startled all beings. They sent, besides, a quantity of snakes, of which Chiven made collars ; likewise several Boudons, who made a terrible noise. The penitents engaged them to kill Chiven ; but this god ordered them to stay always about him, to serve him, which command they obeyed. There next appeared a head, which bounded and howled most frightfully ; Chiven took it, and put it on his own, that no person might be hurt by it.

The penitents perceiving the inefficacy of their sacrifices, were afflicted, and became furious.

In spite of their little success, they continued them, and produced the giant Mouyelouguin, whom they besought to destroy Chiven, and sent him with the fire of the sacrifice ;

Chiven took the fire in his hand, and mounted on the back of the giant, after having thrown him down by a kick of his foot; then all the Deyerkels sung his praises; the noise they made was like that of the sea, when the moon is at the full. The penitents had recourse to sabons, or maledictions; but these even were of no effect, and their mouths were tired with the utterance.

Ashamed at having lost their honour, without the power of revenge, they made a last effort; they assembled all their prayers and penances, and sent them against Chiven; this was the most terrible sacrifice. God himself could not stop the effect; they came out like a mass of fire, which went to attack all the parts of Chiven, and detach them from his body. Chiven, full of indignation against the penitents, resolved, with these same parts, to burn all the earth. The conflagration was already very considerable, when Vichenou and Brouma, being interested to preserve the beings, sought for means to stop the flames.

Brouma took the figure of a pedestal, and Vichenou the natural parts of a female. Under

der these forms they received the parts of Chiven, and prevented the general conflagration. Softened by their intreaties, Chiven consented the world should not be burned, on condition that all mankind should adore the detached parts of his body: thus the figure of the Lingam means a kind of trinity; the basin represents Vichenou; from the middle proceeds a column, round at the top, which represents Chiven; and the whole is supported by a pedestal, which represents Brouma.

The Lingam is held in great veneration throughout India: its followers are very numerous; they rub the forehead, breast, and shoulders, with ashes of cow-dung, esteemed by them sacred, as they represent Chiven, who, as a destroyer, has fire for his attribute; the effect of which is to reduce every thing to ashes. They always wear the figure of the Lingam about their neck, or else tied round their arm, in a silver box.

Zealots, as well as the Pandarons, wear collars and bracelets of the nut of Roudren. The followers of Vichenou despise this worship, and deem it infamous.

It appears, by Indian tradition, that Vichennou wanted to abolish the Lingam, in order to propagate the tenets which he brought from Siam; but this worship being universal in India, at the time of his arrival, he had great trouble to change the ideas which the people had formed of the divinity. The wars he was obliged to carry on, to make proselytes, as well as disciples, did not permit him entirely to effect this revolution; and the major part of the Indians still worship the Lingam.

The Lingam may be looked upon as the Phallus, or the figure representing the virile member of Atys, the well-beloved of Cybele, and the Bacchus which they worship at Hieropolis. The Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, have had temples dedicated to Priapus, under the same form as that of the Lingam. The Israelites worshipped the same figure, and erected statues to it. The holy scripture informs us that Asa, son of Roboam, prevented his mother Maacha from sacrificing to Priapus, whose image he broke. The Jews caused themselves to be initiated into the mysteries of Belphegor, a divinity like the Lingam, whom

whom the Moabites and Midianites worshipped on Mount Phegor; and which worship, in all appearance, they received from the Egyptians.

The figure of the Lingam is still to be seen in bas relief, on the lintel which surrounds the Circus at Nismes, as well as on the front of some of our antient churches; particularly on that of the cathedral of Thoulouse, and on some churches at Bourdeaux.

The penitents, worshippers of the Lingam, like the priests of Atys, observe the most rigorous chastity; and if they do not carry the fanaticism so far as to mutilate themselves, like the first, they are obliged to reduce themselves to a state nearly similar, by the use of palliatives. The necessity of appearing entirely naked in public, and in a state of contemplation, imposes it as a duty; for if these people who come to pay their adorations (as in the natural Lingam they only see the image of God), were to perceive that they experienced the least motion of the flesh, they would esteem them infamous, and stone them to death. They enjoy the same veneration as

the

the priests of Atys; and, like them, are reputed to be prophets; and their predictions are taken for truths.

This worship is a proof of the great antiquity of the Indians, as it is certain neither this worship, nor the doctrine of the metempsychoisis, was established among the Egyptians till after their voyage to India.

Chiven had four sons, the first, and greatest of all, is Pollear: he presides over marriages; the Indians build no house, without having first carried a Pollear on the ground, which they sprinkle with oil, and throw flowers on it every day. If they do not invoke it before they undertake any enterprize, they believe that God will make them forget what they wanted to undertake, and that their labour will be in vain. He is represented with an elephant's head, and mounted on a rat; but in the pagodas they place him on a pedestal, with his legs almost crossed. A rat is always put before the door of his chapel. This rat was a giant, called Gudje-mouga-chourin, on whom the gods had bestowed immortality, as well as great powers; which he abused, and did

did much harm to mankind. Pollear, intreated by the sages and penitents to deliver them, pulled out one of his tusks, and threw it against Gudje-mouga-chourin; the tooth entered the giant's stomach, and overthrew him, who immediately changed himself into a rat, as large as a mountain, and came to attack Pollear; who sprung on his back, telling him, that hereafter he should ever be his carrier. The Indians, in their adoration of this god, cross their arms, shut the fist, and in this manner give themselves several blows on the temples; then, but always with the arms crossed, they take hold of their ears and make three inclinations, bending the knee; after which, with their hands joined, they address their prayers to him, and strike their forehead; they have a great veneration for this deity, whose image they place in all temples, streets, highways, and, in the country, at the foot of some tree; that all the world may have an opportunity of invoking him before they undertake any concern; and that travellers may make their adorations and offerings to him, before they pursue their journey.

It

It is well known that the Jews also had altars in the fields, where travellers sacrificed victims, to obtain the blessing of performing a happy journey.

The second son of Chiven is Soupramanier, whom his father produced from the eye in the middle of his forehead, to destroy the giant Souraparhma. This last, by strength of penances, had obtained the government of the world, and immortality; but became so wicked, that God was obliged to punish him. He sent Soupramanier, who fought him unsuccessfully for ten days; but, at last making use of the Velle, arms which he had received from Chiven, he cut the giant in two: these two parts changed, one into a peacock, and the other into a cock. Soupramanier gave them a better heart, and from that moment they paid homage to Chiven. He enjoined the peacock always to carry him, and the cock to be always in his standard; also, in temples particularly consecrated to him, and in all those of Chiven, where he always has a small chapel, he is represented mounted on a peacock, with six heads, and twelve arms; having his two wives by his side.

Vairevert, the third son of Chiven, was created from his breath, to overthrow the pride of the Deverkels, and the penitents, and to humble Brouma, who had vaunted that he was the greatest of the three gods. Vairevert pulled off one of Brouma's heads, and received the blood of all the Deverkels and penitents in the skull: but, in the sequel, he brought them to life again, and gave them purer hearts.

According to the Indians, this is the God who will come to destroy the world, by the command of Chiven, at the end of the ages: he is represented of a blue colour, with three eyes, and two teeth jutting out, like a crescent; he carries heads round his neck, as a collar, which fall on his stomach: his girdle is made of serpents; his hair the colour of fire; bells are on his feet, and in his hands are a choulon, a tidi, a cord, and the skull of Brouma; he is mounted on a dog. Some temples are dedicated to Vairevert, but he is principally worshipped at Cachi, near the Ganges.

The fourth son is Virapatin, whom Chiven produced from the sweat of his body, to pre-

vent the effect of a sacrifice, which Takin made, to create a new god. Virapatrīn was born with a thousand heads, and a thousand arms; he slew Takin, and all who were present at the sacrifice; but Chiven, in the sequel, pardoned them, and they came again to life; Virapatrīn has some temples, but they are less frequented than those of other deities.

The Indians also address their prayers to Darmadive, God of Virtue, whom they represent under the figure of an ox. They always build him a chapel before that of Chiven, because he is the animal on which Chiven rides: in small temples they place him before the door, on an unshapen pedestal; and, in the large temples, his chapel is of a different construction from that of the other gods: it is composed of a square pedestal, the four corners are adorned with pillars, to support a covering which keeps the idol sheltered from the injuries of the weather. In the temples where Chiven is represented under a human figure, he is mounted on a white bull, who is the God of Virtue. In some writings, Darmadive is called Bofwa, a word which solely

means an ox. All authors, and even Indians, who have not a perfect knowledge of the mythology, confound Darmadive with Nandiguesfouer, porter of Calaifson, whom they represent with the head of an ox; but the worship of this last is different, as well as the chapels which are likewise dedicated to him, in the temples of Chiven.

It is to be presumed that the ox Apis, to whom such magnificent temples were erected in Egypt, is no other than the Darmadive of the Indians. The golden calf erected near mount Sinai, by the Israelites, was an imitation of Apis, a worship they had received from the Egyptians, and which was, in the sequel, established all over the kingdom of Israel, by king Jeroboam.

Anoumar, and Gueroudin, on whom Vichennou rides, have also their chapels in his temples.

The Indians have, beside, Manarsuami *, who is a god at this day unknown. Some

* He is also called Caniercoil. Canier signifies a virgin; and Coil a temple.

imagine him to be Chiven; his priests, or poutcharis, say on the contrary, that he is a transformation of Soupramanier; but this tenet is not generally received, and the Bramins do not agree about it. His temples, which are very small, are in the fields; commonly three colossal figures of brick are constructed before the door, representing Boudons seated, who are said to be guardians of the temple within: beside the Lingam, which is the principal figure, there are seen the figures of Chiven's sons, and of twelve young virgins. Choutres perform the daily ceremonies, which are never performed by the Bramins, as they despise the worship.

SECTION I.

OF THE DEMI-GODS.

THE Indians have also Demi-gods, or Deverkels *, who inhabit the Sorgon + ; the most noted are Devendren†, Aguini, Yamen, Niroudi,

* Deverkels is the plural of Devin, which signifies God : some authors have called them Dewetas.

+ The Sorgon is the Paradise of Devendren ; it is above the earth, and is the residence of those who have not merited Calaifson, or the Paradise of Chiven : those who go thither, do not eternally remain there ; after having, for some time, enjoyed all sorts of pleasure, they return to the earth, and begin a new life. Some authors have called it Chuarguan, Xoarcam, Amarabedi, and Dévelopon.

† Devendren is king of the Demi-gods ; he governs the Sorgon, and supports the east part of the universe. He is represented covered with eyes, with four arms holding a hook, a coulichou, and mounted on a white elephant. Devendren had many wars to sustain against the giants, enemies of the gods, which are related in the sacred books ; alternately conqueror, and conquered, he has, at several times, been driven out of the Sorgon, and it was only by the protection of Chiven, of Vichenou, and of Brouma, that he at last destroyed the giants, and remained peaceable possessor of the Sorgon.

Aguini, god of fire, is the second of the gods, protectors of the eight corners of the world. He supports the south-east

part

Niroudi, Varounin, Vayou, Couberen, and Isanien. These beings, to the number of eight, are the protectors of the eight corners of the world: temples have never been erected to them; their images are only placed in the temples of Chiven. They are invoked for procreation.

part of the universe, and is represented with four arms, holding in two a crit; his head surrounded with flames, and mounted on a ram.

Yamen, God of death, and king of hell, is the third. He governs the fourth part of the universe; he is represented under a terrible figure, holding a staff in his hand, and mounted on a buffalo.

Niroudi, king of the demons, and bad genii, is the fourth. He supports the south-east part of the universe, and is represented carried on the shoulders of a giant, and holding a sabre in his hands.

Varounin, god of the sea, is the fifth. He governs the west part, and is represented mounted on a crocodile, and holding a whip in his hand.

Vayou, god of the wind, is the sixth. He supports the north-west part; he is represented mounted on an antelope, and holding a sabre in his hand.

Couberen, god of wealth, is the seventh. He governs the north, and is represented mounted on a white horse, adorned with plumes.

Isanien is the eighth. He protects the north-east, and has obtained the privilege of appearing under the figure of Chiven. He is represented like him, of a white colour, mounted on an ox, with four arms, holding a stag and a toudi, which are the attributes of Chiven.

Chou-

Chourien *, Sandrin, Anguaraguen, Bouda, Barassouadi, Choucrin, and Sani, are seven demi-gods, or seven planets ; to each of whom one day of the week is dedicated. Besidē these principal demi-gods, the Indians acknowledge thirty-three courous † of Deverkels, who are pure spirits, all sons of Cassiber and Adidi ; whose habitations are in Sorgon : they are divided into tribes.

The first comprehends the Vasloukels, wh

* Chourien is the sun, to whom Sunday is consecrated, Sandrien, the moon, who presides over Monday. Anguaraguen is Mars, who presides over Tuesday. Wednesday is consecrated to Bouda, or Boudin, who is Mercury. Barassouadi, or Peressouadi, is Jupiter; he is the gourou of the Deverkels, and presides over Thursday : some authors have called him Brashapeti Brahaspadi. Chourien is Venus; gourou of the achourers, who presides over Friday ; and in some authors is called Velly, Soucrahavagam, Soucrassari, and Soura. Sani is the god who punishes men, during their lifetime ; he approaches only to hurt them ; Saturday is consecrated to him ; the Indians fear him much, and address prayers to him : he is represented of a blue colour, having four arms, mounted on a raven, and surrounded by two serpents, who form a circle about him. In making the planets demi-gods, the Indians differ little from the opinion of Zeno, Plato, Philo, and others ; who maintain that the sun, moon, and stars, are animals, endowed with thought and intellect.

† A courou is an hundred jacks, and a lack is an hundred thousand.

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are called atchte Vassoukels *, because they are eight in number.

The second, the Maroutoukels, who are only two.

The third, the Guinerers, gods of musical instruments.

The fourth, Guimbourouders, gods of singing.

The fifth, the Chidders.

The sixth, the Vitiaders.

The seventh, the Guerouders, who have wings, and whose noses resemble the beak of an eagle. Vichenou rides on a Guerouder.

The eighth, the Grindouvers, famous for their beauty; they have wings, and fly in the air with their wives.

The ninth, are the Pidourdevadegals, that is to say, protectors of the dead. The Indians address their prayers to this last tribe alone, paying no adoration to any of the others.

They also adore Mariatale, goddess of the small pox.—They have likewise the Calis and the Poudaris; who are the protectresses of the

* Atchte signifies eight; Vassoukels is the name of the tribe.

cities:

cities: each city has its own; they address prayers to these tutelary divinities, and build them temples out of the villages; they are commonly pleased with sanguinary sacrifices, and there are places where even human victims are exacted. They are not immortal, and take their names from the city over which they preside, or from the form under which they are represented; they are commonly drawn of a gigantic stature, having several arms, and the head surrounded with flames; several fierce animals are also placed under their feet.

Although they have the greatest veneration for the names of the penitents, whom they find mentioned in the sacred writings, yet they do not adore them. As for those saints who by their virtue have obtained Paradise, and who are innumerable, they place the portraits of some of them in their temples, and address their prayers to them, after having paid their adoration to the deity.

The Indians have likewise made a division of the giants *, or bad genii; the first tribe

* Some authors have indistinctly called them Ratsjasjas, a name approaching to Rachader, which would only belong to the second tribe.

comprehends the Achourers, of whom some have governed the world, a favour they obtained by their penances. The second is the Rachadars, who have often subjected the world under the government of some of their kings; but these last, abusing the power given them by the greater gods, they were punished for it by Chiven and Vichenou. The third is that of the Bouders, or Boudons: these are the attendants and guards of Chiven. The fourth is that of the Caleguejers: this is the most powerful race of giants; they inhabit the Padalon. The fifth is that of the Guinguers, who are endowed with extraordinary strength; they serve the Achourers in quality of soldiers, and also inhabit the Padalon.

Many of these malicious genii are condemned to wander on the earth after their decease, on account of their bad actions, and cannot quit it but by collecting the prayers the Indians make to the gods; so that they get near those who are praying, and endeavour to confound them, that they may omit some of the ceremonies prescribed by their ritual; it is by this means, and not by their own works,
that

that they can find grace before the Lord. When they have collected a sufficient quantity of prayers, they are permitted to change their nature; and then, from wandering unfortunate genii, they become souls, passing into the bodies of men, and by this change enjoying the happiness promised to the latter: in order to prevent such surprize, is the reason that the Indians, in beginning the divine service, repeat a prayer, and fling water three times over the left shoulder, which is the only part where the genii can attack them. They believe also in spirits; of whom, however, no mention is made in the sacred books:—they attribute the same qualities to them which we give to hobgoblins; they name them Mouni or Cateri; they are described also under the collective name of Pichache; they have no body, but take what form they please; it is particularly during the night time that they roam to hurt mankind, endeavouring to lead astray travellers to precipices, wells, and rivers; transforming themselves into Will-o'-the-wisps, houses, men, or animals, to conceal the danger into which they are conducting the traveller. It is to

make them propitious that the Indians erect colossal statues to their honor, and pray to them.

I have given but a small sketch of the Indian mythology, confining myself to what was necessary for the understanding of this work; but I propose giving a more complete treatise on the subject, after the translations of the Candon of the Bagavadam, and some other original books I have had procured me.

BOOK II.**OF THE****RELIGION OF THE INDIANS.****C H A P. I.****OF THE****INDIAN DOCTRINES.**

THE conformity of the Indian tenets with those of all the Asiatics, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Greeks, and Romans, sufficiently proves, that all those religions, though different in appearance, had the same origin.

If the monuments and traditions of the Indians are to be credited, India was the cradle of all those religions, and the Brachmans were the authors: they at first propagated it in those happy climes, of which they were the priests and legislators; but the fame of their wisdom

wisdom soon spreading over the face of the earth, philosophers of all nations wished to become their disciples; and, sacrificing every thing to the desire of being instructed, they came in flocks to India; where having learned the principles and ethics of the Brachmans, they returned with the knowledge into their own countries, and from that formed their religion *.

We need not seek any other origin for the ingenious doctrine of the Metempsychosis, which Pythagoras introduced into Italy: it was established by Vichenou in India, and Pythagoras adopted it in a voyage which he there made. The Egyptians, the Greeks, and many other nations, even the Jews, at the

* History informs us that the Egyptians traded with the Indians: that the Greeks and Romans took their fables and principal forms of worship from the Egyptians, and that the Jews themselves received a part of their tenets from that ancient people.

See the Dissertation of Mr. Schmit on an Egyptian colony established in India, approved by the Academy of Inscriptions: also the History of the Commerce and Navigation of the Egyptians, by Mr. Ameilhon; Philosophical Enquiries on the Egyptians, &c.

commencement of their law, made it the basis of their religion*.

The Metempsychosis is a fundamental tenet, which could not pass from the Indians to other nations, without the greatest part of their religion passing with it; so that Europe, Asia, and Africa, are certainly indebted to the ancient Brachmans for their primitive doctrines. Some celebrated writers will have it, that the Bramins are the descendants of the Brachmans †; the

* There is great appearance that this doctrine is of the highest antiquity. If we attend to nature, we see, in effect, that nothing is annihilated, but that every thing changes its form; which naturally leads us to imagine, that the same parts which compose a man, after having undergone an infinity of different forms, might one day find themselves joined together as they were at first. Natural philosophy being certainly the science first cultivated, the continual metamorphosis of beings is a striking object, in leading to the idea of the Metempsychosis. An ancient looks upon this system as a friendly deceit, that softens the horror man naturally has to death, by the comforting thought, that he ceases to live, only to begin a new life, and that his soul does but change its habitation. Pythagoras said, he remembered that he had inhabited four bodies, and it is him whom Virgil means in these lines.

“ *Ipse ego, nam nemini, Trojani tempore belli,*

“ *Penthoides, Euphorbus, eram.*”

† All the ancient historians, and even many of the moderns, have called them Brachmans; some give them the name of Bramesus;

the resemblance of the name, most probably, has produced this error ; but if we consult the sacred books of the Indians, we shall find, that the Bramins were not spread over India, till Vichenou, under the name of Rama, came to preach his doctrine : so that we ought to esteem the Lamas, the Bonzes de Foe, those of Siam, of Tonquin, and Cochin China, the Talopoins of Pegu and Ava, the priests of Ceylon, those of Egypt and of Greece, as the successors of the ancient Bramins, or of their disciples : and, I believe, there are only the Saniaffis, a kind of reli-

others call them Brāmins or Bramines : John de Bairos, a Portuguese historian, calls them Bramins or Bramines ; Jean de Fouist, in his description of the kingdom of Guzurat, says they are called Bramans.

Many are fallen into a greater error ; they have made the Bramins descend from Abraham, by the children of Cethura his concubine ; for, say they, these children, being driven, according to scripture, from their paternal house, and departing towards the east, might have established themselves in India, and formed a new race in those burning climates.

St. Epiphanius, particularly, is of this opinion ; and says, in his treatise against heresies, that the children of Abraham, by Cethura, having been banished, and as it were abandoned by their father, retired into the territory of Magodia, a country of Arabia Felix, and from thence may have gone as far as India.

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gious Indians, who are the true descendants of the Brachmans.

There is no nation more attached to their religion than the Indians: during five thousand years it has undergone no variation; that is to say, since the institution of the fect of Vichenou; posterior to that of Chiven, by several thousand years. They are no less attached to their customs, which appear to them as so many admirable principles of natural law; according to which, the old men of each cast judge the disputes that happen among their members. The aversion they have for the customs of other nations is inconceivable. Though they are oppressed in the interior country by the Moguls, they prefer that tyrannical yoke to the tranquility they enjoy in European establishments; nothing can reconcile them to European customs, and their hatred continually encreases by their living among us. Some merchants alone, and that more on account of interest than inclination, are less distant to foreigners; but the Bramins, the penitents, and many others, have an invincible dread of any thing that has the least affinity to

European manners; so that I verily believe it an impossibility to induce them to change their religion. After the example of the Moguls, their country may be ravaged, all kinds of cruelty exercised, and they may bend under the yoke of slavery; but they never can be forced to abandon the deity whom they adore. If there has sometimes been a convert to Christianity, it has been some wretch or other from the dregs of the people, in whom the feelings of want had absorbed all others; and to whom every religion was alike. Yet they never were initiated, and they have always preserved the customs of their ancestors. Has all the eloquence of the missionaries been able to convert a single Bramin? Would the latter embrace the Christian religion, to be on a level with the Paria? He who imagines himself to be above kings, and thinks he makes a part of the supreme Being! If Mahommet extended his new doctrine into India, it was only among the Tartars and the Persians; it is true, that the Moguls, who adopted Islamism, established themselves in Indoostan after they had

conquered

quered it ; but the Gentoos became their slaves, without embracing their worship.

In comparing the tenets of the ancient Brachmans, with the absurd fables and superstitious practices of the Indians in our days, we might be apt to imagine they had degenerated from their ancestors, who acknowledged only one God, perfect and immutable ; but we easily perceive, that this intellectual idea of the Divinity could not long subsist in a nation void of passions. It was necessary to have recourse to sensible images ; the priests invented fables and allegories, which they substituted in the place of simple truths : through ignorance, and love of the marvellous, they soon became sacred ; and, without doubt, will subsist a long time, because it is very uncommon to find among them any one man, who, by the effort of his genius, soars above the herd : enervated by the climate, abased by slavery, all their existence is reduced to incurious vegetation ; and not being willing even to have the trouble of thinking, they depend on the Bramins for the choice of their ideas and actions.

Of all the treatises that have been written on the Indian mythology, Mr. Dow's is certainly the best; yet he gives only a superficial idea of the religion of Bengal. However excepting some trifling differences, occasioned by the sects and by the languages, the same principles are there perceived as those of the Tamouls: people who spoke the Bengal language dictated the names to Mr. Dow, which he wrote according to the English pronunciation; while the Tamouls themselves dictated them to me, according to their own idiom. A material difference will result from this occasion; but the names would be of no signification, if the ideas were the same on the creation of the world and the origin of the gods.

The ancient people of India adored the sun* and moon: this worship still subsists among some

* All nations have adored the sun: the Jews and the Israelites paid homage to him. The sect of the Essenians, among the Hebrews, every day saluted the rising sun, and invoked him in the morning to appear. God expressly forbid this idolatry; and commanded those, who were found guilty of adoring the sun and the moon, to be stoned. Deut. c. xvii. v. iii.—In the

some Indians, who have lived separately from the rest of mankind, in woods and mountains: afterwards they became the adorers of fire; either esteeming this element as forming a part of the sun, and of that being by whom all things are vivified; or that they discovered in its extinction the emblem of life and of the decay of nature. What seems to confirm this last idea, is the homage they pay to Aguini, god of fire, whom they worship, because fire is the representation of Chiven, the destroying god; and they yet keep a fire on the mountain of Tirounamaley, which is held in great veneration*. The Brachmans, whose principal

the book of Kings, c. ii. this idolatry is related as the principal cause of the ruin of the kingdom of the Jews, which was ravaged by enemies, whom God had raised to execute his vengeance. Plutarch endeavours to destroy this worship among the Greeks; he says, in his book of Isis and Osiris, that the elements are not to be adored, neither the sun nor the moon, because they are only mirrors in which may be seen some trace of the infinite wisdom of the Creator, who has made them so brilliant and beautiful.

The Bramins at this day address prayers to the sun every morning, in making the Sandivani; and modern ages have beheld a vast continent, where no other deity is known.

* All people have had sacred fires. The Athenians had a perpetual fire kept by widows; and among the Romans it was kept

tenet was the unity of god, became their priests; the study of these philosophers, like that of the Bramins, was to foretel rain and wind, in a kind of almanack; their disinterestedness, their sober and retired life, as well as austere morals, and the rigorous penances which they imposed upon themselves, made them to be esteemed as sages; and their doctrine to extend over all India. But the Bramins soon destroyed this sect, and changed the object of worship, which they caused to be addressed to the principal attributes of the deity, that of creation, preservation, and destruction; these three metaphysical beings were in the sequel personified, and described under the names of Brouma, Vichenou, and Chiven.

by virgins. The book of Leviticus orders the Jews to have a sacred fire continually burning. The Greeks had one in the temple of Apollo. The Parsis, or Guebres, descendants of the ancient Persians, established in Guzerat, have from them a sacred fire, which they still adore because they esteem it an image of the deity. The Chaldeans, as well as all the people of America, adore fire; when it went out, it was a presage of all sorts of misfortunes to the state. In a word, all nations have esteemed this element as the common cause of life, of the destruction and regeneration of the world. The lamps in our temples are the remains of the ancient worship of fire.

This

This division formed three sects, who, instigated by their priests, joined against each other, and carried on a desperate war; in which the sect of Brouma was totally destroyed.

All the incarnations of their gods are monuments of the contests, or of the wars, among the different sects. In their traditions they give the name of Rachadars, or giants, to those of an opposite sect; and of Deverkels, to those who were their partizans.

The followers of Vichenou, to avoid the same fate as those of Brouma, acknowledged the Chivenests to be the most powerful, followed some points of their doctrine, and equalled Chiven to Vichenou: the conquering Chivenists refused to acknowledge either Vichenou or Brouma. But the wars they soon after had to sustain against robbers, who came from the end of the world to ravage their country, obliged them to suspend their religious quarrels; but without reconciling them. The two sects which now subsist, have so much contempt for each other, that a follower of Chiven, who hears the name of Viche-

nou

nou pronounced, immediately runs to the bath to purify himself.

Nevertheless, they are at this day the only effects by which Indians are distinguished ; their customs and festivals are the same ; the difference between them is in the daily ceremonies, the prayers, and exterior marks which they make on their bodies ; but they agree in the fundamental tenet of the unity of the deity ; and all acknowlege him to be an eternal, uncreated, omnipotent, impassible, just, and merciful God.

Creator of the universe, he is omnipresent, hears and sees all things, and nothing is hid from his divine knowledge. After death, he, with equal justice, distributes rewards, or inflicts punishments. To follow the emotions of his mercy or of his vengeance, he often takes visible forms ; and it yet happens, that he daily shews himself on earth, when he is address'd by the virtuous heart.

At the end of the fourth age, and at the time fixed by his eternal decrees, he will destroy the world, as he destroyed it three ages ago. Compassionate to the weakness of our

organs

organs, he has permitted us to worship him under various forms and figures ; these forms and figures, after being consecrated with the ceremonies prescribed, become God himself : they also acknowledge subaltern divinities, to whom the supreme being has delegated a part of his power ; ministers of his will, they have each their department, and execute a particular function, with which he has intrusted them. God wills that divine homage shall be paid them ; but different from that which is rendered to himself. These secondary divinities are spread over all nature, and preside over whatever it contains ; the heavens, the stars, the airy regions, earth, hell, mountains, woods, and rivers, have their tutelary deities : cities and villages have equally their protectors, which are called *Calli* * ; and notwithstanding their prodigious number, the world is beside filled with good and bad genii. The Indians differ in their system respecting the origin of the soul ; some maintain it has

* This was the opinion of the Greeks and Romans ; and, among us, the provinces and the cities have a patron.

existed from all eternity : others, that it was created with the world, and is an emanation of the deity * ; but all are of opinion that it is mortal, and must perish with the world †. All that respiration, or such soul which unfolds its faculties only in proportion to the organic perfection of the body it inhabits :—all are destined to the enjoyment of bliss with the deity ; but to obtain this supreme felicity they must be free from every blemish ; and it is only by the most severe trials and penances that they can be purified. On the death of each individual, the soul appears before the tribunal of

* Plato also says, our souls existed before we were born, and before we were conceived. St. Augustin seems to lean to this opinion ; Origene and the Priscillianists thought that they were created before the body.

Plato and the Stoicks say, that souls are not only an emanation of the deity but of his proper essence ; not by any diminution of the divine substance, but an emission in the same manner as the light from the sun is diffused, without being in any shape diminished.

† The Stoicks thought that souls would live till the heaven and earth were burnt, but not eternally ; for they believed that the souls returned to their origin, and consequently were re-united to God, from whom they sprang. The Jews thought that the souls of Pagans, and of those who had perished by the deluge, would never be raised again.

God,

God, by whom judgement is passed, and reward is given, or punishment in hell, according to the enormity and multiplicity of crimes committed. After this last expiation the soul returns to the earth, where it inhabits the body of some person, vile and abject in proportion to the crimes committed in its former life. If the destiny of the soul has been so unfortunate, that it is doomed to animate the body of an animal, it will successively pass into different disguises of this kind, except some fortunate circumstance delivers it from this deplorable state; because an animal cannot perform a meritorious act. Those fortunate circumstances are, the sight of a deity, whether in his temples or in the streets, during the ceremony of a procession: sometimes the sight alone of a holy place may operate for the deliverance.

At this epocha the soul passes into the body of a man, and thus wanders from body to body, till it becomes perfectly pure, by the total forsaking and renouncing the goods and pleasures of this world, as well as by the most rigorous austerities and penances, and is worthy to penetrate to the the residence of the

deity. All souls whom a violent death hastens to the grave, except those who perish in a war, or in defence of their gods, or their country, remain wandering and rambling on the earth as long a time as they were destined to live in the bodies they lately animated; they can be judged only after this interval. Such are the common principles of the Indians; they have all the same holy books, and we cannot call them idolators, as they acknowledge only one supreme being. The other objects of their worship were deified by the Bramins, who saw no other method of extending and fixing their power. From hence sprang the absurd fables with which they filled the imagination of the people, and which in the sequel became articles of faith. *not deb*

However contemptible they may appear to us, it is still essential to know them. Religions of all nations, even the most barbarous, present a medley of folly and wisdom; and the philosophy which analyses them sometimes gathers useful truths, from the remains of falsehood and allegory. *not enough from*

It may be a matter of surprise, that the Indians, whose sacred books are all the same, do not agree in their objects of belief; but the reason may be found in those very books, either badly translated, or wrongly interpreted, in the different idioms: the Tamouls possess only four; neither are these originals, being only translations of the Pouranons. The knowledge they have of their religion, proceeds only from the faith they put in these imperfect copies, or from what the Bramins inform them is contained in those books which are not translated; but if all the world could read the sacred books, in their original language, we should still see a difference in their tenets and worship, because all would not comprehend them in the same manner. How many Catholics and Protestants have read the scriptures in Hebrew and in Greek, and, interpreting them in their own way, have become more attached to the opinions which divide them? It is probable the translators altered the text of the Pouranons, and inserted fables well known in the country where they wrote, as well as the reveries of their imaginations; and, to make

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make them more authentic, they added, that they were taken from the Vedams; which was not easy to disprove, as it is a long time since the Vedams were no more known. This is the origin of the different sects.

The Pouranons are divided, and contain alternately the praises of Chiven, Vichenou, and Brouma. The Indians were at liberty to chuse their deity, as all these books are esteemed canonical. From that period three sects were formed, who made bloody wars against each other, and were soon reduced to two, by the total extinction of that of Brouma.

In order to understand the true religion of the Gentoos, a faithful translation of the Vedams is necessary, which I think impossible. Had we only the ancient religion of the first Bramins, we should not have that of our time, which has no other foundation than the true or false translations of their original sacred books.

As soon as the Indians had chose their supreme God, they gave him all the names by which the omnipotent Being was described in the canonical books; so that the Chivapatis say,

say, that they are the attributes of Chiven; and the Vichenoupatis, those of Vichenou; with this difference, that the Chivapatis esteem Vichenou only as a creature primarily and principally created by Chiven, while the others believe that Chiven and Vichenou are only one God, under different attributes. This I believe is the idea we should have of the Gentoo religion: the foundation is the same; but the additional parts are very different; and it cannot be otherwise, because it has no longer for its basis the original volumes, but only some commentaries, or other books, pretended to be taken from the Vedams.

The Bavagadam, which is in the king's library, is only an extract, and not a translation, of the Pouranons, and is composed solely for the honour of Vichenou; therefore it is in contradiction with the Candou*, and the other books in honour of Chiven.

From this variance, all Europe say, that the religion of the Gentoos was full of contra-

* A sacred book, one of the Pouranons, in honour of Chiven. See, *Sacred Books of the Indians*, chap. iii.

dictions.

dictions. The Indians might say the same of ours, if they ever thought of reading all which the different sects of Christians have written.

In the first ages, India was only divided into two sects; that of Chiven, and that of Brouma. That of Vichenou dates only five thousand years, and was of no estimation, until its followers, uniting with the Chivenists, massacred the partizans of Brouma. It is impossible to know the origin of the two first sects, from the sacred books of the Tamouls: the sect of Chiven seems to have existed from time immemorial. With regard to that of Vichenou, the history of the sixteenth incarnation seems to affirm, that its first rise was in the kingdom of Siam; we there see Rama quit his throne to become a penitent, or gymnosophist of the ancients: he traverses the Ganges, and the mountain Sitrecondon, on the coast of Orixa; his doctrine, which he spreads over the whole country, draws a crowd of proselytes. Puffed up with his success, he goes over all India, and endeavours to make himself worshipped sword in hand: after having taught his opinions in this method, in the kingdom of Endagarenion, he goes to the desert of Pangiavadi, which

which seems to be the Midura of our days, and crossed an arm of the sea, now called Ape's Bridge; from thence this ambitious sectary goes to Ceylon; Ravanen, king of that island, not willing to adopt his doctrines, a desperate war ensued, and it was not till after the death of Ravanen, that he assumed to the being worshipped.

He placed Vibouchanen, brother of this giant, who had resisted him during four years, on the throne. At length, after having employed fourteen years to found his religion in India, and in the neighbouring countries, he returned triumphant to his kingdom.

It was most probably at that time that the metempsychosis was introduced amongst the Indians; and Kempfer has improperly believed, that it was introduced by the priests of Memphis. It is true, these last took shelter in India, while Cambyses destroyed their temples in Egypt, and massacred the greatest part of them; but Pythagoras, who travelled in India long before this period, found the same tenets; which makes it sufficiently appear, that Rama, or Vichenou, is the same as Foe Som-

SONNERAT'S VOYAGES.

monacodon, the Xaca of the Japanese, and the Boudda of the Chingulese.

We read in the history of China, that Foe governed a small territory to the westward of that kingdom ; that he married a queen ; that he had a concubine of great beauty ; that he made them two divinities, in the same manner as Vichenou made two goddesses of Latchemi and Boumidévi ; that after having suffered several irruptions from the neighbouring people, he quitted his kingdom to live a solitary life, and preached the metempsychosis, which he had invented.

During twelve years that he spread his doctrine in the neighbouring states, he drew to him a number of disciples, who assisted him to remount his throne, and to extend the limits of his kingdom. It is said, moreover, that he became very powerful, and that he had a numerous posterity.

This history is exactly like that of Rama. To have a perfect knowledge of the religion of the Indians, it is necessary to enter into the same details at Surat, Bengal, and among the Marattas, as I have done on the coast of Coromandel ;

romandel; and in the removing every thing that belongs to locality, we shall obtain a true idea of the principles and worship of the Indians.

C H A P. II.

OR THE

WORSHIP OF THE INDIANS.

THE worship of an inoffensive and good people will never be barbarous, because they will chuse benevolent deities, and blood will not flow on their altars. If the worship is under the direction of wise men, they will never accustom them to a spectacle so horrid. He, who without fear, hears the lowing of the bull he sacrifices, or, with cold blood, can plunge the knife into the palpit'ing heart of the lamb, in his religious fury, will soon dare to sacrifice human victims.

A nation, gentle in its manners, will have many priests, but few sacrificers. If offerings are necessary to certify the dependance of men

N 2 towards

towards the gods, they will be sought for in the vegetable world. Such is the actual worship of the Indians. Formerly, and in times far back, they sacrificed animals, and even men ; but in their timid cruelty, they felt a horror at the sight of blood ; the victim's throats were not cut ; the sovereign pontiffs were satisfied with strangling them.

The doctrine of the metempsychosis, established in India by Vichenou, abolished all sacrifices ; and they now offer to the deity only money, rice, incense, fruits, cocoa-nuts, milk, grains, and flowers *. The practices of devotion

* Their sacred books, nevertheless, teach the method of sacrificing a horse, and even a man ; but as considerable expenses are incurred by the necessary ceremonies, kings are only able to perform them ; but this seldom happens.

The feast of Vigiadechemi, and that of the second day of Pongol, or the hunting of the gods, are also a kind of sacrifices, because they kill animals to take the auspices. Vide chap. v. of the Festivals of the Indians.

Abraham Roger says, that it is an ancient tradition in the country, of their sacrificing, in former times, a man every year to the devil Ganga, (which is Mariatale, goddess of the small-pox) but that, in the sequel, they obliged this deity to be satisfied with a buffalo or wild bull. This custom subsisted a long time among other nations.

The

tion are as simple as the offerings ; they consist in fasting, prayers, penances, and above all in pronouncing a thousand times a day, if it is possible, the name of the god they adore : but the principal point to insure happiness in another life, is, to give alms to the Bramins.

Bathings in the sea, and in the sacred rivers, are very essential points. The Indians are also obliged to perform pilgrimages to the most famous temples ; to procure the water of the

The Carthaginians sacrificed two hundred children of their first nobility to the devil. The Danes, and other northern nations, had a custom of sacrificing ninety-nine men, with as many horses and cocks, to the devil, on the first of January, every year. The Druids, when any great personage fell ill, or was in imminent danger, made a vow of sacrificing a man to their gods, in order to obtain the cure ; being persuaded the danger of one man could be only averted by the death of another. The ancient Germans, the Swedes, and the Goths, made the same sacrifices. This horrible worship was spread over the whole earth, as if the deity was to be honored by the destruction of his works.

The Latins sacrificed men to Saturn, whose throats were cut before the altar ; or they were flung into the Tiber. — Hercules, on his return from Spain, advised them in future to sacrifice effigies of men made of straw ; which counsel they followed.

Sacrifices have been from all times ; they had their birth with religion itself, from the creation of the world, as it appears by the history of Cain and Abel.

Ganges,

Ganges, and carry it to Ramesourin, to wash the Lingam of the temple in that village: they likewise imagine they make the gods more propitious to them, in digging tanks on the high-ways, and building temples and choultries, where travellers may find shelter from the injuries of the weather. Is not this the best manner of honouring the deity, as it contributes to the natural good of his creatures?

C H A P. III.

OF THE

SACRED BOOKS OF THE INDIANS.

THE Vedams are the most ancient books of the Indians, and held in the greatest veneration; they adore them as the divinity himself, of whom they believe them to be both an emanation, and a part: they fear they should profane their name, were they to pronounce it otherwise than in their prayers.

These

These books, according to the Indians, were immense, and innumerable; the life of man is not long enough to learn them, and ignorance springing from this difficulty, the true God remained without worshippers. Vichenou took pity on a people, victims of involuntary darkness. He caused Viasfir to be born of a part of himself, who put the Vedams in order, and abridged them, which gave him the surname of Vede Viasfir *; he reduced the whole into four books, which are now called Jroukou, Ifsourou, Saman, Adrenam †; this last was subdivided into four parts, and treated of magic: the Bramins say it is lost; but we shall soon see that the other three Vedams have, perhaps, no better existence.

Viasfir taught them to the four penitents, Vaisambaener, Pailaver, Sayeamouni, and Sou-

* This incarnation of Vichenou is esteemed only accidental, and on that account no temple has been erected to it; they are satisfied with placing the portrait of Viasfir under the figure of a penitent, in the pagodas of Vichenou.

† They are also known by the names of Roukouvedam, Ifrou or Ezourvedam, Sama or Chamavedam, and Andernam or Andernayedam.

mandou,

mandou, in order to divulge them to the world, and to propagate the Indian faith.

Some historians have maintained, that the Indians have found their religion in the Old Testament ; and that the Vedams have great affinity to the Pentateuch of Moses. According to their account, the Jroukou Vedam relates the history of the creation of the world, in the same manner as the book of Genesis. The Ezour Vedam regulates the worship, ceremonies, offerings, and manner of building the temples, the same as Leviticus ; but further, the Chama Vedam teaches the science of augurs and divinations, and treats of the manner of using arms, whether by natural means, se-crets of magic, or by enchantments ; it also teaches the rules of judaicial astrology, as well as the art of witchcraft. All this, as is evi-dently perceived, has no relation with the books of Moses : and although in the Indian worship enter several Judaical rites, such as bathing, purifications of legal impurities, these ceremo-nies were in use among the ancients before the law of Moses. Thus the Indians must have ob-tained their knowledge from a more ancient source.

According

According to the Indians, the Vedams treat, or rather did treat, of all sciences: in that respect they differ from the sacred books of all other nations; which, properly speaking, are only historical, where philosophy, astronomy, natural history, and other branches of knowledge, are only mentioned as far as they are relative to the religion.

These books are written in a style so sublime, that truth spoke the language of deceit, while fanaticism adopted that of obscurity; so that few people could understand them. The Bramins being the most learned, made commentaries on them, which the Indians have, in the sequel, placed among the number of their sacred books: the first were the Shaftas, or Chastrons *; they are six in number, and treat of astronomy, astrology, prognostics, morality,

* Or also Saster, Chaster, and Sastram. These words differ only in pronunciation. They all signify science. The people give neither the same signification or extent to this term. They understand it to mean only the science of futurity; and the Bramins, who find their profit in fostering these visions, apply themselves in general to judicial astrology, because they get by this science more than by any other, and it is less tedious and laborious to them.

rites, physic, and civil law. It is easy to perceive, that philosophical errors must be frequent ; but once consecrated by religion, they become dear to the Indians, who stamp them with the seal of truth : from which this lamentable consequence must be drawn, that these people are condemned for ever to be a dead weight on the globe, and will never be fit for the cultivation of the sciences.

It is from the Chastrons the astronomical Bramins calculate the course of the moon, and of the planets, and make the pandjangans or almanacks : by the means of set forms, that are couched in enigmatical verses, they have arrived at the art of calculating eclipses with facility and exactness. This is likewise the book consulted by the astrological Bramins, to foretel what shall happen, and tell the fortunes of men and children, as also the days and moments that are lucky or unlucky.

The dread of misfortune makes the Indians so superstitious, that they undertake nothing, without having first consulted an astrologer ; and, if the prognostics are not favourable, whatever assurance of success they may have

have from other quarters notwithstanding, they desist from their undertaking.

Monfieur de Voltaire, after Mr. Holwell, too confidently asserts, that the Shasta is 1500 years anterior to the Vedams. The Indians on the Coromandel coast are not of this opinion. The Tamouls are persuaded, that the Vedams are the most ancient books, and that they were composed at a period so distant as to be lost in the highest antiquity *.

The Yagomons, in number twenty eight, were also composed after the Vedams: these treat of the different sorts of sacrifices, of the circumstances on which they are to be offered, prayers belonging to the different divinities, and of the presents with which their altars are to be adorned.

* According to Mr. Dowe, who wrote in Bengal, the two principal Shastas are more than four thousand and eight hundred years old, and are only a reform and abridgement of the doctrine contained in the Vedams, the true original religious books of the Indians, to which they assign the creation of the world, for their epocha. In this the Bengalees agree with the Tamouls.

The twenty eight Pouranons* are also commentaries on the Vedams: they contain the history of the gods of the country, much in the same manner as the divinities of the Greeks are treated of in Ovid's Metamorphosis. Ten are consecrated to sing the praises of Chiven, his supremacy over the other gods, the creation of the world by his will, his miracles and wars: they have three thousand strophes, or verses. Four are in honour of Vichenou; and they give praise to this god, the preserver, without abasing Chiven, whom they compare to him.

The fifteenth and sixteenth are to the praise of Brouma, whom they equal to Chiven and Vichenou; it is impossible to give a juster idea of them, than by saying they resemble very much a paraphrase, which might be made in the manner of the liturgy from the last strophe of our hymns, of the doxology. The two last Pouranons celebrate the fun

* Or poems.—The Indians attribute the composition of the Pouranons to Viasser alone; but it is not possible for the life of one man to be long enough to compose these sacred books, as it would take a man's life to copy them only.

and fire, under the name of Aguini; the one as god the reviver, and the other as god the destroyer. Their names are Sayvon, Paoudigon, Maharcondon, Ilingon, Candon, Varagon, Vamanon, Matchion, Courmon, and Peramandon; these ten are consecrated to Chiven: the four in praise of Vichenou are the Carondon, the Naradion, the Vaichenavon, and the Bagavadon: the Padoumon and the Peramon are in honour of Brouma; and the Peramacahivaton, and the Aguineon, are the names of those which sing the praises in honour of the sun and the god of fire.

Although the Pouranons are not of such great authority as the Vedams, they, nevertheless, are the rules of faith; and when they are quoted on any difficulty relative to points of religion, all doubts cease, and the question is resolved.

All these books have been composed in the Samscroutam, or Grandon language, which is fallen into disuse, and understood by a very small number of Indians; and even they have but a very imperfect knowledge of it.

There are only four Pouranons translated into the Tamoul dialect; the Sayvon, the Candon,

Candon, the Courmon, and the Bagavadon; so that these, with some ancient and modern works, in which are described the lives and wars of several kings, who, being beloved by their subjects, were deified, are all that the Europeans have been able to consult. The people have the permission to read them.

The Vedams celebrate the supreme Being under different attributes: the Bramins, in order to keep the people in subjection, caused a separate worship to be made to each attribute; but the tenet of the Brachmans, being the unity of the deity, and their belief being opposite to that which the Vedams taught, these philosophers stole those books from the Bramins, which occasioned a war, where half the Indians were destroyed, and where the Vedams disappeared. The conquering Bramins substituted the Shasta in their place; but, as the Vedams gave them an unlimited power, and made them superior to the laws, and to princes, they circulated a report, that the treatise on magic was the only book lost. The surest method to have this fraud credited, was to make it an article of faith: this they did not fail to do,

and

and on this subject invented the fable of the first incarnation of Vichenou. A giant, who represents the Brachinans, had got the Vedams; Vichenou changes himself into a fish, to engage with him; he exterminates him; but as the giant had swallowed the stolen books, the fourth was found digested, when the god opened his belly to recover it. The Brains, in order that they might not be obliged to shew these books, prohibited the people from having any knowledge of them, declaring they were unworthy to read them, and attributed the sole right to themselves, as descendants of the divinity: when they are now interrogated about the Vedams, they say, that they are shut up in a cave at Benares: no person could ever get sight of them; neither a copy or translation is known; their existence is therefore at least doubtful*. It is difficult to believe, that after the temptations which have been flung in their way, their avarice should have been

* Vedams.—The translator can venture to assert, that Colonel Polier has a copy of the Vedams complete, which he intends presenting to the University of Oxford.

able to resist the power of gold, which has been so often proffered, to get at them.

Great care must be taken not to place the Ezourvedam, of which we have the pretended translation in the king's library, and which was printed in 1778, among the number of the Indian canonical books; it certainly is not any one of the four Vedams, although it bears the name; but rather a book of controversy, written by a missionary at Masulipatam; it is a refutation of some of the Pouranons in praise of Vicheriou, which are many ages posterior to the Vedams: it is plainly seen, that the author wants to bring every thing back to the Christian religion; yet, leaving some mistakes, so that the missionary might not be discovered under the mantle of the Bramin. Mr. de Voltaire, and many others, are therefore wrong, in giving this book an importance which it does not deserve, and esteeming it as canonical.

In the number of their modern works, there are some written in a sentimental style, composed with great accuracy, and filled with sublime thoughts and flashes of eloquence; in some

some the moral is adorned with fictions, in others it is veiled in allegories ; some simply contain maxims and sentences ; but they are all, more or less, infected with the fabulous history of their divinities. In general, they have been composed to exhort men to the practice of virtue and detestation of vice. The Baradam, or the Life of Darima Rajah, is one of the most esteemed : it is the history of an unfortunate king, who softened the gods by his virtues. He obtained from them riches, victory over his enemies, and was at last deified.

It appears that the Indians formerly had considerable schools, where the masters taught a system of philosophy, according to ideas received among them ; of which some fragments, scattered here and there, still exist ; but very unintelligible. At this time there are hardly any remains of these academies or colleges : the Moguls destroyed them through policy, in order to keep the Indians in ignorance and greater subjection. However, schools for children are yet very common. They are held in the choultries of the pagodas ; they

sit on the ground, and trace characters on the sand; which they continually efface, till they are able to form them with a bodkin upon palm-leaves. In European settlements they have the liberty of being instructed. Their principal study, on account of commerce, is limited to arithmetic; in which they excel all other nations*.

C H A P. IV.

OF THEIR TEMPLES.

THE Indian temples are monuments which prove the antiquity, patience, wealth, and superstition, of the people by whom they were constructed: those built on the coast of Coromandel, after the same model, differ from them only by their grandeur, and

* It is probable that Pythagoras learned his doctrine of numbers from the Indians; and the ancient geometers the practice of tracing their figures on the sand.

the number of pyramids and chapels which they contain. In Bengal they are not so considerable: the architecture of those of Malabar varies much. Some, however, have the marks of the earliest antiquity.

The most famous temples on the coast of Coromandel for the followers of Chiven, are Tirounamaley, Chalembron, and Tirvalour: the Indians hold these in such veneration, that they have given rise to the following proverb: "It is necessary," say they, "to be saved, you should be born at Tirvalour; or, in expiring, see Chalembron, or think of Tirounamaley; or expire at Cachi, on the banks of the Ganges." With the followers of Vichenou, the most famous temples are those of Tiroupadi, of Chirangan, and Cangivaron; but they all, in general, have histories, or fables, which make them more or less celebrated.

The temple called the Seven Pagodas, which is seen between Sadras and Pondicherry, must be one of the most ancient on the Coromandel coast; because, being built on the sea-shore, the waves, at this day, beat up to the

first story : this is a phenomenon which we leave to the pursuit of natural philosophers.

The pagoda of Chalembon also appears to have marks of great antiquity ; but the inscriptions which might have ascertained its origin, are for the most part effaced. The characters yet to be read are become useless, in surviving a language of which they described the sounds.

We are not better informed of the period in which the pagoda of Chirāngam was constructed. The revolutions which alternately made different nations masters of India, have thrown an impenetrable veil over the times which preceded them.

If we believe the annals of the country, and the sacred books, the pagoda of Jagrenat * will incontestably be the most ancient ; the calculations of the Bramins carry its antiquity as far back as the time of Paritchiton, first king of the coast of Orixa, whose reign they place at the beginning of the fourth age of

* It is also pronounced Jaggernat, and Janeaguén.

the world; which gives a duration to this building of 4883 years.

The pyramids of Egypt, so much spoken of, are very feeble monuments, in comparison with the pagodas of Salcette and Illoura: the figures, the bas reliefs, the thousands of columns with which they are adorned, cut by a chisel in the same rock, indicate at least a thousand years of continual labour, and the depredations of time design, at least, three thousand years existence. After this we shall not be surprised, that Indian ignorance attributes the first of these works to the gods, and the second to the genii.

Round those temples, which are of some note, very high and thick walls form several square inclosures, whose angles are commonly flanked in with bastions *; each side has generally a door, over which is a pyramidal tower, called Cobrom, which crowns a round mass of buildings of prodigious size; these

* These bastions have been constructed since the establishment of Europeans in India, and are mostly their work. By this means the temple serves for a fort, and some have sustained long sieges.

towers,

towers, of more or less height, are loaded with figures, most commonly very obscene, and which represent the life, the victories, and misfortunes of the gods: to each story, and on the four sides, is a kind of window; every night a light is placed in the highest. On festival days all these openings are adorned, and in the middle of the innermost inclosure is the sanctuary, or chapel of the deity,

If the temple is consecrated to Chiven, the Lingam is the principal figure. Round it are scattered a multitude of small chapels, dedicated to his sons, and some principal deities of the sect.

Darmadeve, god of virtue, represented under the figure of an ox, has always his chapel built before that of Chiven, who rides on him. Vichenou, as guardian of the temple, has his chapel by the door. The vaults of these edifices, as well as the towers, are loaded with obscene figures.

In the temples of Vichenou, the last inclosure contains only the sanctuary of this god, who inhabits it with Latchemi, his wife. Along the walls, Anoumar and Gueroudin have

have their chapels, which, like the others, receive their light only by an exceeding low door, which makes them very dark: during the ceremonies they are lighted by a great number of lamps; the steam of the oil and grease finding no vent but by this door, remains for a long time, and impregnates them with a disagreeable smell.

The famous temples have a sacred tank, deified by the Bramins, who attribute to it the virtue of purifying those who bathe in it, and exempting them from the metempsychosis: this deceit attracts strangers and offerings. The other inclosures contain choultries, or perystiles, sometimes immense, under which the people and travellers are sheltered. There are also small recesses, where they place the portraits of some saints and kings, who by their virtues have merited the honour of being deified. The Bramins have also their apartment.

The fame of a temple often draws princes from far distant countries: these illustrious pilgrims, loaded with rich presents, come there to solicit particular favours.

The

The most famous temples are erected to Chiven, Vichenou, and Soupramanier, son of Chiven: those of the children of Chiven, and some canonized kings, such as Darma-Raja, are much smaller. Pollear, although one of the most powerful gods, has no temples; but only chapels in those of Chiven. His statues are set up in the open air on all highways, and sometimes inclosed in a small lonely sanctuary, in the streets and in the fields.

The images of the gods may be made of stone, copper, or gold, but never of silver or other metals; that of Pollear must be always of stone.

Each pagoda has two statues of the same idol; one without the temple, to which the people themselves present their offerings, and the other within, to whom the offerings are made, through the medium of the Bramins, who alone have the privilege of approaching it.

It is the Bramins who wash the idols with milk, cocoa-nut, or gengely oil, adorn them with flowers, make the unctions, and perform all the daily ceremonies.

The

The people remain without in a vestibule, supported by several rows of pillars: they assist at the ceremonies with their hands joined, and with great respect, while the Bayaderes dance to the sound of instruments, and sing the praises of the deity: when they are finished, the Bramins distribute to the assistants the flowers with which the idol was adorned.

The inauguration of a temple is very expensive: sometimes they wait many years before a proper day is found for this solemn festival, which lasts forty days; during which time they nourish the Bramins, of whom they have assembled as many as they could possibly get together.

As soon as the temple is built, they chuse a Bramin for the patriarch, or high priest; who, when once chosen, is prohibited from marrying or leaving the pagoda; he shews himself but once a year, sitting in the middle of the sanctuary, and leaning on cushions: the people remain prostrate before him until he escapes from their sight.

The dignity of high priest is hereditary in his family; the chief always possesses it, and

has as many Bramins as he can maintain, for his assistants: for this purpose the sovereign grants him lands, called manaiions, exempt from all taxes whatever; he enjoys, beside, the tax called magame, on merchandize, and other goods belonging to those of his religion, and which pay import and export.

The Indians seem to make him responsible for all the evils with which they are afflicted. When public calamities do not cease by fastings, mortifications, and prayers, he is obliged to be the first in flinging himself headlong from the top of the pagoda, and by such sacrifice to appease the gods.

After the inauguration of the temple, they celebrate a festival in honour of the principal deity who is there worshipped; it is called Tirounal, and is renewed every year on the same day. We shall describe it in the next chapter.

C H A P. V.

OF THE

INDIAN FESTIVALS.

THE primitive festivals of the Indians were plays, designed to perpetuate the memory of great events or illustrious personages: those who by noble actions had deserved much from their country, were admired during life; their death was lamented, and they were deified in the sequel. In this manner it is that divinities have been multiplied among all nations, and the sports became religious ceremonies; their true principle disappeared under the shade of imagination, and the philosophy which would retrace the cause, is lost in the darkness with which it is surrounded. The Tamouls regulate their festivals by the lunar year, excepting some which return with the Natchetrons, such as the Tirounal, which they celebrate every year on the same day; and the Pongol, which begins with the month of Tai. The people of India have

assigned the hours of night to their festivals ; as did also the ancients : their festivals consist in carrying in pomp and procession the god by whom they are occasioned ; either within the pagoda, or without in the village : they make a porch or pendal of leaves before their temples, and carry the idol all round it : every person then brings the offerings, which the Bramins cook for the gods, and which the people may eat after they have been offered *.

The Pongal is the chief Indian festival, and no person is exempted from the celebration. The second is Aidapoutche, or the festival of Tirounal, which without dispute is the most solemn, and attracts all the world, is no otherways of repute than according to the fame of the temple where it is celebrated ; on that occasion all the religious of the coast flock there with their offerings.

* The Syrians, at the feast of the torches, or funeral pile ; and the Hebrews, at the feast of the Passover, made arbours before their temples, and carried their gods round them in procession, whom they afterwards burned. The people then presented their offerings, which commonly were lambs and sheep ; and after the priest had made the first libations upon them, each person carried his victim home to eat it.

THE FESTIVAL OF TIROUNAL.

The festival of Tirounal, or of the chariot, is the dedication of the temple, consequently it has no fixed days. It lasts ten days. In the most famous temples, such as those of Chalembon, Cheringam, Jagrenat, &c. people come from all parts of India.

Some days previous to the festival, offerings are made to the idol; porches or pendals * are erected wherever the god is to stop; these pendals are adorned with the finest tapestry, representing the life and metamorphosis of the deity.

The evening before the celebration, the tamtams and other instruments go through the places where the procession is to pass, to inform all women with child to absent themselves during the ten days, as they are an obstacle to the procession.

The first day after, many offerings followed by processions, are made within the inclosure

* A kind of resting place, made with the boughs of trees and painted linens.

of the temple, to the sound of a great number of instruments: they wind the flag round the flag-staff, and at night carry the idol about under a canopy.

On the second day, the idol is carried in procession, and at night they put him upon a kind of swan called Annon.

On the third day, the procession is made in the morning; the idol is carried on a fabulous lion called Singam, and in the evening on a kind of bird with four feet, which they call Yalli.

On the fourth day, if the feast is in honour of Vichenou, he is mounted in the morning on Anoumar, an ape of prodigious size; this ape carries Vichenou, and was of great service to him when he made war on Rayenen, king of the Island of Languer*. In the evening he is carried on Gueroudin, another of his carriers.

If the festival is in honour of Chiven, in the morning that god is carried on a boudon, or

* It is also known by the name of Lanca; but much better by that of the Island of Ceylon.

giant ; and in the evening on an ox, which is Darmadeve, god of virtue.

On the fifth day, the idol is carried both morning and night on the serpent Adissecheri, who supports the earth with his thousand heads, and is the bed of Vichenou in the sea of milk.

On the sixth, he is carried in the morning on an ape; and in the evening on a white elephant.

On the seventh, there is no procession, but in the evening the idol is placed on a window at the top of the towers of the pagoda, and this day is destined for the offerings they chuse to make to him : every one is anxious to contribute to the avaricious desire of the Bramins ; one of whom takes account of all that is offered, and which they take for their own use, after having offered them to the idol.

On the morning of the eighth day, the Bramins themselves carry him in a palankeen, and make the tour of the inclosure of the pagoda ; in the evening he is carried on a horse, and in that manner makes the procession.

On the ninth, the procession is made morning and night in the inclosure of the pagoda.

goda. The idol takes his departure under a canopy carried by the Bramins.

The tenth and last day they make a very solemn procession, at which a prodigious concourse of people attend with presents for the idol: they then place him on a stone altar, adorned with flowers and streamers; this altar is called Termouti *, and serves to facilitate the means of placing the idol on the chariot, which is to carry him, and take him off again, when the procession is over. This day is called the festival of Teroten, which means the course of the car: from six to seven thousand persons draw the god in a great chariot, and join their repeated cries to the sound of a great number of musical instruments: on this day the chiefs of the villages give money as alms, for the marriage of orphan Bramins.

The chariot is an immense machine, car-

* Ter signifies car, and Mouti, conveyance. This altar is without the temples; you go up a stair case made at the back part. The chariots destined to draw Chiven, Vichenou, and Soupramanier, are the only ones of such a height as to need a place to get upon them.

ed, on which the wars, life, and metamorphosis of the deity are represented, and is adorned with streamers and flowers; pasteboard lions, placed at the four corners, support all these ornaments; in the front are horses of the same materials, and the idol is on a pedestal in the middle:—he is fanned by a great number of Bramins, to hinder the flies from settling on him. The Bayayderes and the musicians are seated round, making the air resound with the thundering noise of their instruments; fathers and mothers of families, holding their children in their arms, have been seen flinging themselves across the way, that they might be crushed to death, in expectation that the divinity would bestow eternal happiness upon them in another life. This spectacle did not impede the procession of the god, because the auguries would not have been favourable. The procession marches over the bodies of these unfortunate wretches without any emotion, and the machine pounds them to atoms.

Whether superstition has less sway, or whether the rights of humanity are better

known, we do not now find the zeal very ardent for this horrid devotion; and there are only some fanatics who throw themselves under the wheels to be crushed.

FESTIVALS OF EACH MONTH.

The eleventh of April is the first day of the month Chittere, on which day the Indian year commences: the Tamouls celebrate its return by a festival called Varouche, Paroupou, which signifies the birth of the year: the festival is solemnized within doors, and the ceremony of Darpenon is performed for the expiration of ancestors. Above all things alms must be given to the poor, and to the Bramins; a good work performed on this day is worth a hundred done at any other time. The rest of the day the Indians divert and regale themselves, in order to be happy through the year, as they believe their happiness during the year depends in the manner in which they begin it.

At

At Parouvon, or the full moon, is the feast of Chittere-Parouvon ; they make Pongol * for Citra-Poutrin, secretary to Yamon, god of death, who keeps the register of the virtues and crimes of mankind. It is for him that the fast called Ourchendi † is performed. This festival is celebrated only within doors.

In the month of Vayaffi, which answers to the month of May, on Sadouratassi of Amarrasse, or the eve of the new moon, is the feast of Narsinga Jeinti, which is celebrated only in the temples of Vichenou ; it lasts nine days, and processions are made, provided any person will be at the expence. On this day Vichenou metamorphosed himself into a man-lion, to kill the giant Erenien ‡.

* Pongol, as will be afterwards seen, (in the festivals of the tenth month) in the great festival of Pongol, is a ceremony which consists in mixing rice and milk, which they offer to the god for whom it is prepared ; after which all the family must eat a little of it.

† Ourchendi is the little fast ; that is to say, they must eat only once in the twenty-four hours ; instead of which, at the fast of Obarasson, which is the complete fast, they do not eat during twenty-four hours.

‡ See the fourth incarnation of Vichenou.

On Parouvon, or the full moon, is the feast of Maharavaisagui, which is celebrated only by the Bramins: they pray and perform ceremonies for the death of their ancestors.

In the third month Ani, which with us is June, the Tamouls celebrate no festivals; but they make the little fast, and the Darpenon for the death of their ancestors. They are obliged to perform the same ceremonies every month, at the new and full of the moon, provided no festival falls on those two days.

In the fourth month, Addi, which answers to our July, on Natchetron, called Pouron, which happens in this month, is the feast of Addi-Pouron, which is celebrated in the temples of Chiven, in honour of the goddess Parvadi: they carry her in procession in a chariot. This ceremony is made eight days before in the temples of Chiven, provided that any person will defray the expence.

At Tidi-Chati, after the Amavasse, or fourth day after the new moon, they make Naga-Poutche *.

* Vide chap. 6, of the Particular Ceremonies of the Indians.

In the fifth month, Avani, which answers to the month of August, in Panchemi, after the Amavasse, or fifth day after the new moon, is the feast of Gueroudin-Panchemi, which consists in the Naga-poutche.

The Friday nearest before the full of the moon is then feast of Varlachimi Noembou. Some Indians only celebrate this feast, because having once kept it they contract an obligation to celebrate it perpetually, both themselves and their descendants. It is principally kept by the Bayadars; because it procures them the means of drawing money from their lovers, and from all those at whose houses they sing and dance that day.

This feast is in honour of Latchemi, and is solemnized within doors. The little feast is observed; and the men tie a thread of yellow cotton about their right arm, and the women about their neck: the Bramins come and make the Poutche.

On Natchetron-Moulon, which happens in the same month, is the feast of Avani-Moulon, which they celebrate in the temples of Chiven, because on that day the god performed the following miracle :

Mani-

Manicavasséguer, or Manicavasser, minister of Pandi-Rajah, king of Madura, set out, with a great train and quantity of gold destined for the purpose, to buy horses for the king. He had, for a long time, entertained a great desire to be initiated into the mysteries of Chiven: this god, satisfied of the minister's virtue, would himself be his Gourou. He took, therefore, the figure of a Bramin; and, followed by 999 boudons, disguised as his disciples, went and seated himself under a tree, near which Manicavasser was to pass; who no sooner perceived the pretended Bramin, than he approached him to ask him who he was, and what book he carried under his arm. The god answered, that he was a Gourou, and that the book was called Chive-Yana-Podou: Manicavasser having asked an explanation of each of these words, Chiven satisfied him with so much wisdom, that the astonished minister, no longer doubting but that it was the god himself, prostrated himself before him to worship him, and asked him the favour to be admitted among the number of his disciples.

His prayer was granted ; and the ceremony of initiation was performed by Chiven himself.

Manicavasser stripped himself of all his ornaments, covered his body with ashes, and offered the god all the money he had brought for the purchase of the horses. The god told him to distribute part of it to the poor, and employ the remainder in building temples in his name. The other chiefs of the train, believing that Manicavasser had lost his senses, informed the king of his conduct. The prince wrote his minister to return ; and in case of refusal, the chiefs of the train had orders to bring him by force. In this perplexity Manicavasser had recourse to God, who ordered him to return to the king, and tell him that the horses would arrive the day of Moulon, of the month of Avani ; and to present him with a ruby, which he put into his hands. The minister reassumed his ornaments ; and, followed by his attendants, returned to the city. On his arrival he informed the king, that the horses he expected would arrive the day of Avani-moulon, and presented him the ruby : this ruby was so perfect, and of such great

great beauty, that the king, instead of commanding, gave him a favourable reception.

On the day fixed for the arrival of the horses, a prodigious number were seen approaching the city. The king, impatient to behold them, summoned all his grooms, and went at their head to visit them. The jockeys were so much struck with the perfection of these animals, that none were rejected. They were led to the stables which had been prepared for them; but at night-time a most frightful uproar was heard in these stables: they ran there, and were much astonished to see all the horses changed into so many Adives*, who devoured the old horses belonging to the king. They were actually Adives, whom Chiven had metamorphosed into horses; and under this form they had been conducted by the Deverkels, who had taken the figure of merchants. The king, enraged at the trick he imagined had been played him by his minister, ordered him to be publickly whipped, and then exposed naked to the sun, and obliged to stand on one foot.

* A kind of fox, called, at Pondicherry, Chein Maron.

This

This unfortunate man invoked Chiven, and on a sudden the river of Vaigue was seen to swell, break its banks, and threaten the city with entire destruction. At this prodigy, the prince perceived that an all-powerful hand protected his minister; he therefore applied to him, begging he would pardon him and stop the inundation.

Manicavaffer immediately assembled workmen, who soon put the dykes in order. Chiven was himself in the number: but a discontented overseer thought fit to give him a blow with a ratan, which blow struck all nature, and was felt by gods, men, animals, and all creatures. It was in this manner he disappeared, after having manifested his presence. Notwithstanding all the king's solicitations, the minister quitted his post, left his goods, and, in the habit of a penitent, went from pagoda to pagoda, thanking God for all his mercies: but in performing his devotions at the temple of Ciddambaron, known by the name of Chalembron, he disappeared on a sudden, and was transported to the Cailassion, the

residence of Chiven, and the paradise of his followers.

On Natchetron-Aoton is the feast of Avani-Aoton, which is celebrated in the temples of Chiven. All those who wear strings over their shoulders, such as the Bramins, Chetis, Cometis, and Camaters *, bathe themselves in the tanks or rivers after being shaved : they there throw off their old strings, and take new ones. This day is also consecrated to ask pardon of God for the sins committed during the course of the year.

On Atchemi, after the Parouvon, or the eighth day after the full moon, is the feast of Ouricati-Tirounal. It is the birth-day of Quichena, and celebrated in the temples of Vichenou. During the nine days which it lasts, the god goes in procession through the streets. This festival is particularly observed by the shepherds, in commemoration of Quichena's having been brought up amongst them ; they erect porches or pendals of leaves and of cloth at the doors of the temples, and in some

* The Chetis, the Cometis, and the Camaters, are different castes of the tribe of the Choutres.

of the cross ways. In the middle of these pendals a cocoa-nut is hung, in which there is a small piece of money. This cocoa-nut hangs by a string, one end of which is without-side the pendal, that it may be drawn up or down at pleasure.

The cast of shepherds, or at least all those who still preserve their primitive state, walk in procession together in the streets, and when they come to these porches, in order to pass them they must break the cocoa-nut, which is hung up, with sticks, and which those within endeavour to prevent by pulling the string up and down. This game certainly must have had some cause for its origin, but which is now unknown.

In the sixth month Pretachi, which answers to our September, the fourth day after the new moon, is the festival of Pollear-Chaoti: it is the birth-day of that god. This festival is celebrated both in the temples and in the houses. They observe the little fast, and for its celebration they purchase a Pollear of dried earth, which they carry home, to perform the ordinary ceremonies to it. The next day

this idol is carried out of the city and flung into a tank or a well: those who chuse to be at the expence, put him upon a pompous chariot, accompanied by dancers and musicians; others have him carried on a porter's head.

On Panjemi, which immediately follows, or the fifth day after the new moon, is the festival of Richi-Panjemi, which they celebrate in the temples of Chiven.

On the Sadouratafi following, or the eve of the full moon, is the festival of Ananda-Vourdon; which they celebrate in honour of the three gods, Vichenou, Chiven, and Brouma, who are worshipped under the figure of a serpent with a thousand heads. Under this form they are called Ananda-Perpenadesouami. This festival is kept in the house; those who keep it, only make a collation * in the four and twenty hours. They tie a red string on the right arm, and the Bramins come to conjure the gods.

The only vessel they use on this occasion is of copper, plastered all round with lime, and

* The collation is a repast which consists of sacred sweet-meats and tarts: neither rice or vegetables can be eat.

covered

covered with a cocoa-nut, on which they put leaves of Herbe *, and of Manguier. This festival, as well as that of Varelachimi-Noembou, in the month of August—and of Quedari-Vourdon, in October, are not obligatory: but having once kept it, the celebration always must be continued. Even the posterity of those who have observed it are subject to this law, till they get released from their tacit vow.

It is at Parpenade alone, (which is on the Malabar coast where this divinity has his most celebrated temple) that a release from the vow to observe this festival can be obtained; for this effect, ablutions and purifications are repeated for several days, and besides it costs a large sum of money.

On Predame, which follows the Parouvon, or the next day of the full moon, the festival of Mahaligue - Patchon commences, which lasts fifteen days, that is, till the new moon. It is celebrated only in the houses: the object of this feast is to obtain the pardon of the dead. While it lasts they make the Darpenon

* Herbe is a kind of dog's grass.

for them, and give alms to the Bramins, either in money, linen, or even in vegetables.

In the seventh month, Arpichi, which is our October, on Predame which follows the Amavasse, or the next day of the new moon, the feast of Mahar-Naomi commences, which lasts nine days. It is also called the festival of arms. After the Pongol, it is the most celebrated festival. Processions and public ceremonies are made in the temples while it lasts.

The school-boys properly dressed walk through the streets, accompanied by their masters. They stop at the houses of great men, and sing verses composed in their praise; where they get money to amuse themselves, and their masters also get considerable presents.

The ninth day the Aida-Poutche is made, which means the ceremony of arms. Each person collects all the arms he has, and exposes them without the cases in a chamber well cleaned; and also his books and musical instruments. The Bramin comes to perform the ceremonies. He takes water in a small vase, and first presents it to the gods; then, with Manguier leaves, he sprinkles all the carriages of

of the house, and the animals, such as elephants, horses, cows, bulls, and even boats and vessels, if the owner of the house has any.

The eight first days are consecrated to Chiven, and Vichenou; the ninth day is destined to the honour of the three principal goddesses, Parvadi, Latchemi, and Sarassouadi. The first is represented by the emblem of arms, as the destructive goddess; — the second by the carriages, boats and animals, as the goddess of riches, — and the third, by the books and musical instruments, as goddess of the languages and harmony.

The Aida-Poutche is a feast so sacred, that if an Indian is attacked on the day of its celebration, he will not take arms to defend himself. The general of the Souba of the Decan, who besieged Gingy, chose this day for the assault, being persuaded they would not defend themselves; and he actually entered the place without meeting with the least resistance.

On Decemi, which immediately follows, or the tenth day after the new moon, the festival of Vigea-Decemi is celebrated, which is consecrated to diversions. The arms which had been

been exposed the preceding evening, are locked up: but before they are put in their cases, the Paleagars follow the example of the ancient kings, who cut off the heads of several goats. In the afternoon the gods are carried out of the city to hunt, and a quadruped is killed on the occasion.

On Sadouratafi, before the Amavasse, on the eve of the new moon, is the festival of Divavali, made as rejoicing-day on account of the death of a Rachadin, giant, named Naraga-Chourin, whom Vichenou exterminated on account of the mischief he did to mankind. This festival is celebrated only in the house, and consists alone in washing the head * before sun-rise. It was instituted by Vichenou himself, who says, that all who make this ablution, shall have the same merit as if they had washed themselves in the Ganges. The rest

* Although the Indians bathe several times in the day, they do not call that washing the head, because they wash only with water. According to them, in order to wash the head, it must first be rubbed with oil, then bathed with water, and after this bathing they must deprive themselves of the pleasures of matrimony, as well as of all refreshing food for at least twenty-four hours.

of the day is passed in diversions. It is one of the greatest festivals at Guzerat.

In the eighth month, Cartigue, or November, on the Amavasse or full moon, is the festival of Quedaravourdon *, in honour of the goddes Parvade ; those who keep it make a collation only, and tie a yellow string on their right arm.

On the following Predame, on the next day of the new moon, is the feast of Cander-Chasti, which lasts till Satimi, or the seventh day of the new moon. It is celebrated in commemoration of the defeat of Soura Parpma, a mighty Achourin, whom the god Soupramanier vanquished after a combat of six days †. The seventh day the god is carried in procession ; and in some places they give the representation of the battle where this giant perished. This Achourin is made of dried earth, and armed Indians represent his troops.

* This is one of the three great feasts which, after having been once celebrated, obliges the person to continue the celebration every year.

† See the history of Soupramanier.

On Chaoti, or fourth day after the new moon, is the festival of Naga-Chooti, which consists in the Nagapoutche.

On Natchetron-Cartigue, which in this month always falls on the eve or day of the full moon, is the festival of Paor-Nomi. This is the grand festival of the temple of Tirounamaley, because the mountain on which the temple is built appeared on this day.

The Chivapatis celebrate this festival in all the pagodas of Chiven. It lasts nine days. The pilgrims flock from all the parts of the coast to Tirounamaley:—a great fair is also kept there at the same time.

The history of Tirounamaley is very famous in the Gentoo religion: it is the subject of one Pouranon. The temple is built on a sacred mountain, because it represents Chiven. This deity descended in a column of fire to put an end to a dispute about precedence, which had arisen between Vichenou and Brouma. Chiven, to perpetuate the memory of this event, changed the burning column into a mountain of earth, and ordered his followers to worship it; and it is on account of its primitive

mitive state, that during nine days a great fire is lighted on the top. The fire, which is in an immense copper cauldron, is fed with butter and camphire, which the Indians send from all parts: the match is composed of several pieces of linen, of sixty four cubits each. The Bramins take great care to collect the remains of this fire, which they present to their benefactors, who every day mark their forehead with it. It is in imitation of this sacred fire, that the Chivapatis make in their houses a large cake of rice, kneaded with water alone. They make a hole in the middle, which they fill with butter, and light a small match: they then worship this fire, and fast the whole day; and after six o'clock at night they eat this cake with some fruits.

The Vichenoupatis have a great festival on this same day of the new moon: It differs from the other only in the object; so that the two sects celebrate their festivals together. Feux de joie are let off before the temples; the streets and houses are illuminated, and the gods carried in procession. The Vichenoupatis say, that it was on the day of the full moon in

this month, that Vichenou took the form of a Bramin dwarf, and confined the powerful giant Mahabeli in the Padalon; that this giant, while he governed, being very fond of illuminations, to gratify himself furnished each house with a calon ^{*} of oil, and that in going to the Padalon, he prayed Vichenou that he would have the goodness to continue the customs he had established on the earth. The god promised to grant his request, and at the same time permitted him to return to earth every year on that day, that he might himself be eye witness how faithfully the promise he had made him was kept.

It is on this account that the illumination is made, and that children holding fire in their hands divert themselves in the streets with crying out Mahabeliro.

In the ninth month Margaji, or December, on Yagadechy, after the Amavasse or eleventh day after the new moon, there is a great festival in the temples of Vichenou, called Vaicondon-Yagadechy. It is only cele-

* An Indian measure. Twelve calons are near a pint, brated

brated by the Vichenoupatis, who pass the night in watching and praying, after having fasted all the day. Vaicondon is the name of the paradise where Vichenou resides.

On Parouvon, or the full moon that follows, is the festival of Maharegi-Tiroumangenon. It is only celebrated in the temples of Chiven, and particularly at Chalembron, where this god is adored under the name of Sababadi.

In the tenth month Tai, or January, and on the first day of this month, is the Pongol, the greatest festival among the Indians. It is instituted to celebrate the return of the sun in the north, and lasts two days: the first day is called Boi Pandigue, or Peroun Pongol, which signifies great Pongol. The ceremony consists in boiling rice with milk, to take the auguries as the milk boils. As soon as the first ebullitions are perceived, the women and children cry out Pongol, which means, it boils. This ceremony is performed in the house, and the place appropriated for the purpose must be purified with cow-dung. They make a stove, on which they dress the rice, and which they first present to the gods; all

people

people in the house must afterwards eat a little. The second day the festival is called Maddou-Pongol, or Pongol of cows :—they paint the horns of these animals, cover them with flowers, make them run in the streets, and lastly make the Pongol at home for them. In the evening the figure of the god is carried in procession in the fields. The idol is placed on a wooden horse, whose fore feet are raised as if he was galloping, and his hind feet fixed on a wooden table, carried by four men : they observe in their march to traverse and to imitate the rearing and lashing of a horse : the idol holds a lance in his hand, and seems to be going a hunting. They kill an animal which has been kept for this festival ; it must be a quadruped :—the choice is indifferent, from a tyger to a rat. They particularly examine the side which the animal takes when it is let loose, in order to draw the auguries. On the same day also the Bramins cast lots to know what will happen in the year following : the animals and grain, on which the lots fall, will, as they say, be very scarce ;—if they fall on

on bulls and nelly *, the bullocks will perish, and the nelly be very dear :—if they fall on horses and elephants, it is a sign of war.

The Bramins make the people believe that Sangrandi, one of the Deverkels, comes every year on the earth this day, to discover to them the future good and evil ; which he announces by the grain he eats, and the animal he rides : they are informed of this by the lot.

The same evening the Indians, with their families, reciprocally make presents to each other, and visit in ceremony to wish a good Pongol †, as we do on new year's day :—the visiting lasts eight days.

On Natchetron Pouchon, which always falls in this month, on the day or eve of the full moon, is the festival of the temple of Paeni ; they call it Tai-Pouchon. It is very famous, and people flock to it from all parts of the coast ; and Devots, who by particular reasons

* Rice in the straw.

† The Pongol is nothing else but the Pagan feast for the birth of Mithras. This last presents the allegory of the regeneration of the sun ; and that of Pongol is for the return of this planet. The renewal of the solar year has been always celebrated with great solemnity among all nations.

are prevented from going there, send presents which are called Paeni-Caori. This festival is also celebrated in all the temples of Chiven, but with less pomp.

In the eleventh month, Massi, or February, on Satami, after the Amavasie or seventh day after the new moon, is the festival of Radan-satami; which is always celebrated in the house: they make Pongol for the chariot of the sun:—Radan signifies chariot.

On Natchetron-Magon, which falls on the day or the next day of the full moon, is the festival of Massimagon; it consists in purification in sacred water. The inhabitants of Pondicherry, who have no sacred tanks in their pagodas, go to the river Tircangi, a little beyond Villenour*: they must also fast and pray for the dead, that is to say, make the Dar-penon.

On Tradechi, after the Parouvon, or thirteenth day after the full moon, is the feast of Chive-Ratri; which is in much esteem with

* A village a league from Pondicherry, where there is a very famous temple.

the followers of Chiven : they fast during the day, pass the night in praying, and give alms and food to the Pandarons. Chive-Ratri means the night of Chiven.

In the 12th month, Pangoumi, which answers to our March, on the full moon, is the feast of Camadenou, which was celebrated in the temples of Chiven. It was on this day that the god darted flames from the eye which he has in the middle of his forehead. They consumed Manmadin, god of love, who was reduced to ashes for having dared to shoot his arrows against Chiven ; but this supreme deity, in the sequel, restored him to life.

On Natchetron-Outron is the festival of Pangoumi-Outron, which is celebrated in the temples of Chiven in honour of his wife, the goddess Parvadi.

On Naomi of the Amavasse, or the ninth day after the full moon, which falls always in the month of Chittere, is the festival of Stri-Rama-Naomi : this festival lasts nine days, and is celebrated with great pomp in the temples of Vichenou. Each evening the god goes in procession through the streets, on different con-

veyances ; and on the return of the procession they expose him in the Madan * of the temple, to receive the adorations and offerings of the people.

In many temples they keep particular festivals besides these already related ; but they are not obligatory, and do not enter into the class of annual feasts. They owe their institution only to some histories or miracles performed by the god whom they adore. One of the most considerable is the Manmagon, which is in very great repute at Combouconom, a village of Tanjore, and draws many people together; but it is performed only once in twelve years, in the month of Massi. The year in which it happens is esteemed so very unlucky, that no person dares to marry ; the more superstitious part of the people extend this fear to the year which precedes the celebration, and to that which follows it. The last festival of this kind was celebrated in the

* Madan, or Choultry, is a repository of stone covered with a vault ; adorned on all sides with sculpture, and built in temples to shew the divinity.

month of Maffi, in the year Valambi, that is to say, in February 1779.

I have not clasped among the number of annual feasts those of the subaltern deities, which are not acknowledged by the Bramins, such as those of Mariatale, Darma-Raja, Drobède, Manarsuami, and Ayenar: they are only observed by the people, as the Bramins esteem them all impious except that of Ayenar, where they sometimes officiate.

The day of the festival of Mariatale is absolutely arbitrary, as it is celebrated at pleasure: however, we must except Colenour, four leagues from Pondicherry, where every year a great festival is kept in honour of this goddess: it is called Quedil, and always falls in the month Chittere. Those who imagine they have received great benefits from Mariatale, or who wish to obtain them, make a vow to suspend themselves in the air. This ceremony consists in passing two iron tenter-hooks, tied to the end of a very long lever, through the skin of the votary's back. This lever is placed at the top of a mast twenty feet high. As soon as the votary is hung on the hooks,

U 2 they

they press on the other end of the lever, and lift him up in the air. In this state they turn him round as often as he chuses ; he commonly has a sword and shield in his hands, and makes the motions of a man who is fighting. He must appear cheerful, whatever pain he may feel ; for if tears escape him he is driven from his cast : but this seldom happens. The votary who is to be hung up drinks some intoxicating liquor, which makes him almost insensible, and looks upon this dangerous preparation as a pastime. After turning him several times round, they take him off, and he is soon cured of his wounds : the quickness of the cure passes for a miracle in the eyes of the zealots of this goddess. The Bramins do not assist at this ceremony, which they despise. The worshippers of Mariatale are of the lowest casts, consisting of parias, washermen, fishermen, &c.

Mariatale was the wife of the penitent Chamadaguini, and mother of Parassourama*. This goddess commanded the elements ; but

* Parassourama is Vichenou in his eighth incarnation.

could not preserve that empire longer than her heart was pure. One day, while she was collecting water out of a tank, and, according to her custom, was making with that and earth a bowl to carry it to the house, she saw on the surface of the water some figures of Grandouers*, who were flying over her head. Struck with their charms, desire seized her heart. The earth of the bowl liquified, and the water mixed again with that of the tank. From this time she was obliged to make use of a vase. This inability discovered to Chamauguini that his wife had deviated from purity, and in the excess of his rage he ordered his son to drag her to the place where criminals were executed, and to behead her. This order was executed; but Parassourama was so much afflicted for the loss of his mother, that Chamauguini told him to take up the body and fasten the head upon it, which he had cut off, and repeat a prayer in her ear, which he taught him, and his mother would come

* A kind of sylphs, said to be of great beauty, and who have wings.

again

again to life. The son ran eagerly to perform what he was ordered, but by a very singular blunder, he joined the head of his mother to the body of a parichi, who had been executed for her crimes: a monstrous assemblage, which gave to this woman the virtues of a goddess, and the vices of a criminal. The goddess becoming impure by such a mixture, was driven from her house, and committed all kinds of cruelties. The Deverkels perceiving the destruction she made, appeased her in giving her the power to cure the small-pox, and promising her she should be implored for that disorder.

Mariatale is the great goddess of the Parias, who place her above the deity; several of this vile cast are devoted to her worship. To honour her, they have a custom of dancing with several pots of water on their heads, placed one above another. These pots are adorned with the leaves of the Margosier, a tree consecrated to her. During the small-pox they always put some of the branches in the bed of the sick person, who is not permitted to scratch himself with any other thing: they also

also put branches on the top of the bed in the other rooms, and on the top of the house : the neighbours also put branches of this tree on their houses.

The Indians are much afraid of this goddess ; they erect temples to her in all the villages : her head alone is placed in the sanctuary, to which part only Indians of a good cast address their vows : her body is placed at the door of the temple, and becomes the object of worship of the Parias *. Mariatale being defiled by the junction of her head with the body

* Mariatale is described by all authors who have written on the Indian mythology, under the name of the devil Ganga. They sacrifice he-goats to her. These bloody sacrifices are not made to the sovereign gods, but to mischievous deities. The Indians have this sacrifice in common with the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans ; which makes St. Augustin say (De Civit. Dei, lib. 8, c. 3,) that evil spirits must be conciliated by bloody sacrifices, but the good by festivals and rejoicings ; the first without doubt to prevent them from doing hurt, and the other to induce them to do good : for all ancient nations have admitted two principles ; the first is called Orosmade, and the second Arimane : Orosmade proceeded from the purest light ; but Arimane from the profoundest darkness. The first, according to them, had created all good

of a Parichi, and fearing her son Parassourama would no longer adore her, prayed the Deverkels to grant her another child, and they gave her Catavarayen ; the Parias divide their adoration between his mother and him. This is the only god to whom victuals dressed are offered, such as salt fish, tobacco, &c. because he sprang from the body of a Paria.

No public festivals are made for Ayenar, although he is the son of Chiven and Vichenou, because he is not ranked in the first class of gods : however, as god, the protector of good order and of the police, he receives the vows of those who wish his assistance. They sacrifice kids and cocks to him, in his solitary temples, built far from towns, villages, and highways. They also consecrate to him

things ; the stars, men, planets, and all animals ; the second, on the contrary, all bad things, such as poison, diseases, and war. This subject is amply treated on in the Isis, and Osiris of Plutarch. The ancients entertained this singular opinion, because they thought that one god, pure from essence, and the source of all good, could not be the cause of all the evil which men daily commit ; and that it was not reasonable to believe that he gave in one hand life, and nourishment, and in the other poison and death.

horses

horses of dried earth, which are put before his temple under cover.

In the course of the year they celebrate several festivals in honour of Manarsuami ; but they have no fixed day for them. On the day assigned for the celebration, many ceremonies are made in his temple. Although this god is not much known, many Indians nevertheless adore him, persuaded that he is the same as Soupramanier ; but the Bramins are not of that opinion, and condemn his worship.

The only public festival in honour of Darma Raja, and of Drobeye, is that of Nerpou-Tirounal, or the feast of fire ; because they walk on that element. It lasts eighteen days, during which time those who make a vow to keep it, must fast, abstain from women, lay on the bare ground, and walk on a brisk fire. The eighteenth day they assemble on the sound of instruments ; their heads crowned with flowers, the body daubed with saffron, and follow in cadence the figures of Darma-Raja, and of Drobeye his wife, who are carried there in procession : when they come to the fire, they

stir it to animate its activity, and take a little of the ashes, with which they rub their foreheads ; and, when the gods have been three times round it, they walk either fast or slow, according to their zeal, over a very hot fire, extended to about forty feet in length. Some carry their children in their arms, and others lances, sabres, and standards.

The most fervent devotees walk several times over the fire. After the ceremony, the people press to collect some of the ashes to rub their foreheads with, and obtain from the devotees some of the flowers with which they were adorned, and which they carefully preserve. This ceremony is performed in honour of Drobède. She married five brothers at the same time ; every year she left one, and passed to the arms of another, but first took care to purify herself by fire. Such is the origin of this singular feast ; there are no fixed days for it : however, it can only be celebrated in the months of Chittere, Vayaffi, or Ani, which are the three first months of the year.

C H A P. VI.

PARTICULAR CEREMONIES

OF THE

I N D I A N S.

OF THE POUTCHE.

UNDER the name of Poutche, all the ceremonies which the worship of the different deities daily exact, are comprehended: they consist in bathing the God with water and milk; anointing him with butter and odoriferous oils; covering him with rich cloaths, and loading him with jewels, which they change every day, as well as the other ornaments, when the pagoda is opulent. They also present him with lamps, where butter is used instead of oil; and throw to him flowers of a particular sort, which are consecrated to him, separately, one after another; the number they throw is fixed in their sacred books. During the whole time of the ceremony, the dancers form steps before his statue, to the sound of in-

struments. A part of the Bramins, with chouries of white hair, or peacocks feathers, keep off the insects, while the rest are employed in presenting him the offerings: for the Indians never come empty handed to the temple. They bring *ad libitum* rice, camphire, butter, flowers, and fruit. When they have none of these, the Bramins give them flowers, of which they have always baskets ready; and, after they have received payment, they offer them to the god in the name of the worshippers. It belongs to the Bramins alone to make the Poutche in particular houses, because the divinity must be present, and they alone have the right of making him descend on the earth. On certain festivals of the year, all the Indians are obliged to perform this ceremony, which consists in making offerings, and a sacrifice to God. For this purpose the Bramin prepares a place which is purified with dried cow-dung, with which the pavement is plastered; and the room is sprinkled with the urine of the same animal. A pot of water, covered, is placed in the middle of the room, round which they light

light lamps filled with butter. When every thing is ready, the Bramin, sitting on the ground with his head uncovered, recites prayers, and from time to time flings flowers and rice upon the pot; when the avocations are finished, the god should be found in the pot. They then make him offerings in which they are interested; for they present him that which they desire the year may return to them an hundred fold, such as fruits, rice, and beetel, but no money. The Bramin afterwards makes the sacrifice, which consists in burning several pieces of wood before the pot, which he only has the right to throw into the fire, one after another, and at those moments which are required by the prayer he recites. After this ceremony, the Bramin takes his leave of the deity, by another prayer.

OF DIBARADANÉ. —

The Dibaradané, or offering of fire, is also a daily ceremony in honour of the gods, and makes part of the Poutche. The Bramin who officiates holds in one hand a small bell, which

which he sounds, and in the other a copper lamp full of butter ; he makes it pass and repass round the statue of the god he worships. During this time, the Bayaderes dance * and sing his praises ; after which the assistants in contemplation, with hands joined, address their vows to the idol : the Bramin then

breaks

* To dance before the gods during divine service, and on festival days, was a ceremony much used by the ancients. The priests of Mars, called Satü, were held in great esteem by the Romans : they were excellent mountebanks. They danced at Delos during divine service. This dance was performed in a very singular manner among the Greeks, and the Romans : they move from the left side of the altar to the right, meaning to imitate the course of the heavens, which moves from the east to the west ; they then returned from the right side to the left side, which represented the motion of the planets.

The origin of this dance is very uncertain. King David danced before the Ark, when brought back from the Philistines, and no doubt made his subjects dance to his playing on the harp. We find in Exodus, that the Jews danced before the golden calf ; but there never was known a people like the Indians, who chuse girls of no virtue to dance before their idols ; they are, notwithstanding, on account of their function, esteemed honest ; although in other respects their behaviour might cause them to be regarded as libertines. It is possible, also, that these girls belonging to Pago-

das

breaks the garland with which the idol is adorned, distributes the fragments to the people, and receives from them the offerings they have brought to the divinity.

OF THE ABICHEGAM.

The Abichegam makes a part of the Poutche; this ceremony consists in pouring milk on the Lingam. This liquor is afterwards kept with great care, and some drops are given to dying people, that they may merit the delights of the Calaifson. We find traces of the Abichegam in the earliest antiquity. The primitive race of men had a kind of sacrifice, called Libation, which was made in

das are privileged and esteemed, as cherished by the gods, since the adventure which happened to one of them.

Devendren, under the figure of a handsome man, one day went to find a courtesan, to prove if she would be faithful to him. He promised her great rewards, and she received him well during the whole night. Devendren counterfeited death, and the courtesan was so prepossessed of the truth, that she absolutely would be burned with him, though they represented to her that he was not her husband. As she was going to precipitate herself into the flames, Devendren awoke, acknowledged the deceit, took her for his wife, and carried her into his paradise.

pouring

pouring some liquor, but especially oil, in honour of the divinity. It was also in use in the written law *.

The Indians have preserved this custom, not only in respect to the Lingam, but also in honour of their other deities. They actually offer them libations, wash them with cocoanut oil, melted butter, or water of the Ganges. They always rub them with oil or butter when they address prayers, or present offerings to them ; so that all their idols are black, smoaked, plastered, and dirtied with a foetid grease.

OF SANDIVANE.

The Sandivane is a ceremony which the Bramins alone make daily to the gods in general ; and in the morning particularly to Brouma, as the author of their origin. At sun-rise, they go and take water out of a tank,

* The Talopois of Pegue and Ava, and the priests of Siam, also wash their idols with milk, oil, and other liquids. It is well known also, that the Jews have had sacred stones, which they anoint with oil, and to which they give the name of Betyles.

with

with the hollow of their hand, which they throw sometimes before and sometimes behind them, and over their shoulder, invoking Brouma and pronouncing his praises; by which they are purified and made worthy of his favours. They afterwards throw water to the sun, to testify their thanks and their respect, that he has had the goodness to appear and chace away the shades of darkness: they then finish purifying themselves by bathing. This kind of worship was established by the first race, and the Indians have always preserved it*.

OF DARPENON.

The Darpenon is instituted in honour of the dead. The Indians, after having purified themselves by bathing, sit down before a Bramin, who recites prayers; when the Bramin has finished praying, he pours water with a

* The ancient priests of Egypt in like manner purified themselves by bathing in the morning, and plunging into the sacred waters of the Nile. A worship they might have received from the Indians.

small copper vase called chimbou, into one of their hands, which they present to him open and leaning towards him ; he then throws on the same hand leaves of the plant *Herbé*, and grains of *gengely*, naming the persons for whom he prays. These prayers are made for *Pidours Deve Dekels*, which are the *Deverkels*, protectors of the dead.

O F N A G A P O U T C H E.

The term of Nagapoutche signifies office of the snake : women are commonly charged with this ceremony. On certain days of the year, when they chuse to perform it, they go to the banks of those tanks where the *Arichi*, and *Margosier* grow ; they carry under these trees a stone figure, representing a *Lingam*, between two snakes ; they bathe themselves, and, after ablution, they wash the *Lingam*, and burn before it some pieces of wood particularly assigned for this sacrifice, throw flowers upon it, and ask of it riches, a numerous posterity,

posternity, and a long life to their husbands *. It is said in the Chastrons, that when the ceremony of Nagapoutche is made according to the form prescribed, what is asked is always obtained †. When they have finished their prayers, they leave the stone on the place, never carrying it back to the house: it serves for the same use to all women who find it. If there is neither Arichi or Margosier on the bank of the tank, they carry a branch of each of these trees, which they plant for the ceremony on each side of the Lingam and make a canopy over it. The Indians look upon the Arichi as the male, and the Margosier as the female; though these trees are of a very different species from each other.

* This last demand is called Manguelia-Vourdon, or penitence for the Taly. Manguelion or Taly are synonymous.

† However whimsical this worship may appear, we see it established among all the ancients; and the moderns have enlarged upon them.

C H A P. VII.

OF THE
RELIGIOUS ORDERS
OF THE
INDIANS.

IN all religions we have seen enthusiasts retire into deserts, and pass their lives in mortifications and prayers; but this pious effervescence was of no long duration. The descendants of these first anchorites soon crept to the cities, and while their minds seemed alone to be occupied by the deity, their desires were wholly bent on this world. Under the affectation of disinterestedness, and the most profound humility and contempt for the pomp of riches, they longed for honours, power, and wealth: if they obtained brilliant legacies, it was merely to prevent them from falling into the hands of the ungodly, or to make the way to heaven easier to mankind, the practice

of

of charity: if they built superb palaces, the motive was to erect a monument to the pious generosity of their benefactors; not to lodge themselves commodiously: and who but must have believed them. Their outside appears so penitential, and their contempt for the transitory pleasures of this world so perfect, that they were seen to enjoy all the comforts of life, when at the same time it was imagined that they had never entertained the idea of such enjoyments.

Such have been the ministers of all religions: and it is in India only that we shall find these exalted imaginations, which take a delight in the most painful sacrifices and most austere practices.

The Gentoos have several kinds of religious men: that of the Saniassis or Sanachis is in the highest veneration; the people regarding them as saints. The Saniassi is either a Brahmin or Choutre: he devotes himself entirely to the divinity.—The vows he makes are those of poverty, chastity, and sobriety; possess nothing, and wanting nothing. He wanders every where, almost naked, his head shaved, and

and his back is covered with nothing else than a piece of yellow linen - cloth. He lives by alms, and eats only to preserve life. Men of all castes, except the parias, may become Saniassis ; each sect have their own ; and as they live like the ancient Brachmans, and follow the same doctrine, it may be imagined they are their descendants.

The Pandarons are no less revered than the Saniassis. They are of the sect of Chiven, and rub their whole figure, their breast, and arms, with ashes of cow-dung. They go through the streets asking alms, and singing the praises of Chiven, carrying in their hands a bundle of peacock's feathers. The Lingam is hung about their neck ; and they also commonly wear a quantity of collars and bracelets of Outrachon *. The Pandaron who is not dressed in yellow linen, marries and lives

with

* The seed of four fruit, which grows only in the north of India. They call it equally the nut of Routren, because the followers of Chiven believe he likes to shut himself up in it. Zealots always carry one at least about them to drive away Yarmen, god of death, if they should happen to die suddenly

with his family. Those who make vows of chastity, are called Tabachi: it differs from the Saniassi in this respect, that the Tabachi lives in society, either with his family or with other Pandarons; he acknowledges his thanks to those who give him alms by presenting them with sandal-wood and cow-dung, which he tells them he has brought from holy places. Pandaron is the general name for the religious of the sect of Chiven, as that of Tadin is for those of Vichenou.

The Care-Patrepandaron is a kind of Pandaron; he makes a vow never to speak; he enters the house and asks alms by beating his hands without speaking. Those who are charitable to him, give him boiled rice, and put it into his hands, which he eats on the spot where he gets it, without leaving a morsel, and if it is not enough he goes to another house, and performs the same ceremony. His

suddenly in the streets. This seed is almost round, very hard, and carved like the nut of a peach. It is now and then, by accident, that it forms some figures, in which the Saniassis, followers of Chiven, and the Pandarons, think they discover one of the incarnations of this deity.

name

name is significative. Care means hand; and Patre, plate.

The Paeni-Caori is also another kind of Pandaron, employed to carry the offerings which the Indians make to the temple of Paeni, dedicated to Soupramanier: these offerings consist in money, sugar, honey, camphire, milk, butter, ~~cocoa-nuts~~, &c. The Paeni-Caori is commonly dressed in yellow, like the Pandarons, and carries the presents to be made at the two ends of a bamboo. To keep himself from the sun, he puts an awning of red cloth on the bamboo, much like that of a palankeen.

The Chachi-Caoris are another kind of Pandarons, who make the pilgrimage to Cachi, from whence they bring water of the Ganges in earthen pots *, which they are obliged to carry to Ramesourin, near Cape Comorin, where Chiven has a famous temple. This water is poured over the Lingam in that

* All men, the Parias excepted, can perform the same office, without being of a religious cast,

temple;

temple*; and is afterwards collected to be distributed among the Indians, who preserve it religiously; and when any sick person is in the agony of death, they pour two drops of it in his mouth, and two on his head.

There are, besides these, a number of religious orders in India, of the sect of Vichenou, such as the Tadin, Satadeven, and Vaichenayin, &c.

* The Indians believe that this is the Lingam which the god Anoumar brought from the Ganges, by the order of Rama; that the latter wished to pay his adorations to it after having destroyed the giant Ravanen, and that the tank which is in the same temple was dug by the hand of Vichenou. This Lingam is called Ramanada-Suami, which is as much as to say, God adored by Rama: the tank is called Danoucobi. The Bramins, to raise its reputation, make those who bathe in it believe that their sins are pardoned, and that they are purified. The Indians carry offerings there, and come in pilgrimage from the most distant parts: but that this act may be more meritorious, it is necessary that the pilgrim should have been first on the banks of the Ganges, have slept on the bare ground, fasted during his journey, and that he bring with him a sufficient quantity of the water of this river to bathe the Lingam he is going to worship. Mr. Paw, in his Philosophical Researches, speaks of these pilgrims; but he is mistaken when he says that they go as far as Siberia. This error has made him suppose, that the religion of the Gentoos is derived from that of Lama. The Indians have no knowledge of that god.

The Tadin begs from door to door, dancing and singing the praises and metamorphosis of Vichenou : to accompany himself, he beats with one hand on a kind of tambour, and when he has finished each verse, he beats on a plate of copper with a small stick, which he holds in the two first fingers of the other hand : this plate hangs below his wrist, and gives a very strong and sharp sound. Round his ankles he wears copper rings, called Chelimbou ; these rings are hollow, and filled with small round stones which make a great noise ; which also serve him for accompaniment, and to beat time when he sings and dances. These religious men cover their body with a yellow linen ; and, when they are assembled in the villages, they have a chief who is no otherwise distinguished from the rest than by a large red bonnet, the end of which turns towards the forehead, and finishes like the head of a bird ; the others only wear a plain yellow cap.

The Satadevens form a religious cast, into which the other Indians cannot enter : they are born holy men, marry and live in common ;

mon ; and though they employ themselves in making collars of flowers for sale, yet they are not prevented by that from asking alms, and singing like the Tadins ; and they accompany themselves with an instrument which resembles our guittar.

The Vaichenavins form a tribe like the Satadevans. The only thing by which they are distinguished from the last, is by a small vase of copper which they carry on their heads, and in which they put the alms they receive.

The Poutchari devotes himself to the worship of Manarsuami, or of Darma-Raja ; all men, excepting the Parias, may embrace this state. They perform the ceremonies in the temples of these two divinities.

The Bramins esteem this worship as idolatrous, and no follower of Vichenou will be the Poutchari of Manarsuami, because the Vichenouenists pretend that this god is only a transfiguration of Soupramanier, son of Chiven. The Poutchari of Darma-Raja can be of either sect ; but neither the one or the other are ever Pandarons, or Tadins. The Poutchari of Manarsuami goes in the streets

singing the praises of Chiven and Soupramanier, while the other sings those of Darma-Raja. The first accompanies himself with a Chelimbou, the second uses only a bell; but his wife commonly accompanies him with castanets; and, to finish each verse, she says *Yes*, which seems to applaud what her husband had been singing. Sometimes he carries with him pictures, where the life and the wars of the gods he adores are represented, and reads or sings in public some verses, which relate the exploits of the deified kings; and at other times he pronounces his sentences, or recites his fables, to draw alms from those who pass by him.

The Poutchari of Manarsuami makes use of almost the same stratagem; they sit in the streets, in public places, and most frequented high-ways, singing the praises of the saint or god they revere. Several Acolytes accompany his voice; some with a small tambour, which they call Oudoukai, and on which they beat with their fingers; others sing or rather squall in unison with him, from time to time, to give more energy to what he says. He carries a

box

box full of the ashes of dried cow-dung, which he distributes to those who give him alms.

The Poutcharis marry, and may quit their order at pleasure: their name is derived from Poutche, which signifies, daily ceremony performed to the gods.

The goddess Mariatale has also Poutcharis, whom they call Bainiens, because they accompany their songs with an instrument called Baini. The Bainiens are chiefly of the paria-caste; they do not go about the streets like other religious men, but only ask alms in the temples of Mariatale.

The Indians have besides other religious penitents, with whom I shall close this chapter; they are among the Gentoos what the Fakirs are with the Moguls: fanaticism induces them to quit every thing, goods, family &c. in order to lead a miserable life. The majority are of the sect of Chiven: the only goods they can possess are a Lingam, to which they continually offer their adorations, and a tiger's skin on which they sleep. They exercise on their bodies all that a fanatic fury can convey

to

to their imagination : some tear their flesh with the strokes of a whip, or fasten themselves to the foot of a tree by a chain, which death only can break ;—others make a vow to remain all their lives in an uneasy posture, such as keeping the hands shut, while their nails, which they never cut, in the course of time pierce through them. Some are seen who have their hand always crossed on their breasts, or lifted above their heads, in such a manner that they can no more bend them. These unfortunate people can neither eat or drink without the assistance of some disciples, who follow them : and it may be easily judged what they must suffer during several years, to reduce their arms to this state of inaction. Many bury themselves, and breathe only through a little hole ; and it is wonderful, considering they remain under ground, that they are not suffocated. Others, who are less enthusiasts, are contented with burying themselves only up to the neck. Some are found who have made a vow always to stand upright, without ever lying down ; they sleep leaning against a wall or a tree ; and to deprive themselves of all means of sleeping

com-

comfortably, they put their neck into certain machines, that resemble a kind of grate, which, when once they have put on, can no more be taken off. Others keep whole hours upon one foot, with their eyes fixed on the sun, contemplating this planet with the most earnest application of mind. Some, to have more merit, keep in the same position with one foot in the air, and the other resting only on the tiptoe, both arms also elevated; they are placed in the midst of four vases full of fire, and with their eyes fixed contemplate the sun.

There are also others who appear in public quite naked, and that to shew that they are no longer susceptible of any passion, and are re-entered into a state of innocence since they have given their bodies to the divinity. The people, persuaded of their virtue, esteem them as saints, and imagine they can obtain of God whatever they ask: they also believe that they perform a work of piety in hastening to carry them victuals, and to put it in the mouths of those who are prohibited the use of their hands, and to cleanse them. Some women go so far as to kiss their privy parts, and worship them, while

while the penitent is in a state of contemplation. The number of these religious men are much lessened since the Indians have been oppressed and reduced to a state of slavery. The only person of this kind I ever saw, pierced his cheeks with an iron, which went through his tongue, and was rivetted on the other side of the cheek, with another piece of iron, which formed a circle underneath the chin.

The characterestick of these penitents, is, great pride, self-love, and a belief that they are saints. They avoid being touched by people of a low cast, and Europeans, from a fear of being defiled ; they will not even let them touch their goods, and fly on their approach. They have a sovereign contempt for all who are not in their state, and esteem them as profane ; there is also nothing belonging to them, but what is thought to contain some mystery, and that is not also esteemed worthy of great veneration.

The Indian history has preserved the memory of a great many penitents, celebrated in ancient times, and whom the penitents of this day glory in imitating.

The

The ancients had several sects, who may be compared to the religious orders of the Indians: they lived a wandering and vagabond life, going from city to city singing the victories of the gods; and, condemned to a voluntary poverty, they begged their bread under the veil of religion. The Esseniens believed themselves to be more holy and pure than the other Jews. They made vows of chastity, lived in desarts, eat nothing that had life, and subsisted on roots. They held the effusion of blood, and, above all, that shed in sacrifices, in the utmost detestation. They also sung their hymns, dancing at the same time, like the greatest part of the religious Indians.

The Pythagoreans, among the Greeks, had every thing in common; abstained from flesh, and strong liquors, living only upon vegetables. They were in continual contemplation, observing the most rigorous silence.

The Druids, priests of the ancient Gauls, led a solitary life in desarts, observing celibacy, in the same manner as the religious Indians.

C H A P. VIII.

VIRTUES WHICH ARE TO BE PRACTISED.

OF THE

METEMPSYCHOSIS, PARADISE, and HELL

OF THE

I N D I A N S.

TO adore the Supreme Being ; invoke the tutelary deities ; to be kind to all men ; but especially to pity and assist the unfortunate ; to support with patience the adversities of life ; to abhor lying ; to be faithful to your wife, and love her alone, and to abstain from her during improper times ; to hold adultery in the utmost detestation ; to read and to hear the histories of the deities read ; to speak little, give alms, fast, pray, bathe* at the periods ordained

* The use of baths is extremely natural in a country burnt up by the heat of the sun. The people were induced to it for the refreshment and cleanliness of the body ; and at length

ordained for that purpose, are the general duties of which the sacred books enjoin the performance to all Indians, without exception of cast or tribe.

These books contain, moreover, particular precepts: for example, the Bramins, who are Gourou*, are obliged to learn and teach the Vedams †, to make the sacrifices, or to take care they are made by others, also to receive and to give alms.

The Rajas, who compose the second tribe, must study the Vedams, make the sacrifices, guard the country, and make war on the enemies of the state.

The Vassiers, or Vaniguers, who form the third, are equally obliged to study the Vedams,

length policy, in concert with religion, has made it a legal obligation; and superstition soon attached to it the means of becoming a sacred duty, and of acquiring imaginary perfections.

* Gourou is the high priest: it is the Gourou from whom religious instructions are received, and who directs and makes the sacrifices.

† The Indians apparently understand, by the Vedams, the commentaries of those sacred books; because we have seen that the Bramins have prohibited their knowledge from all men who are not of the tribe, and it is even doubtful if they ever existed.

to make the sacrifices, and to apply themselves to the duties of their profession ; that is to say, the Bons-Vassiers to cultivate the earth ; the Govassiers to take care of the cattle, and that they increase ; and the Donavassiers to trade in gold and silver.

The fourth tribe, whose members are called Choutres, are obliged faithfully to serve the first.

As to the relative duties of individuals, they consist, on the woman's part, to take care of the household affairs, to make herself beloved and cherished by her relations, and to adorn herself to please her husband.—The wickedness of the husband does not exempt the wife from her duty ; she is to conduct herself in such a manner that she may reform him, and is to look upon him as her God : which duties, if she performs, she will meet with her recompence in this life, and that which is to come.

The Bramassari, or young Brâmin, is to be sober, modest, silent, say his prayers at the regulated hours, study the Vedams, reverence his Gourou, return him thanks at the beginning and end of each daily instruction, and

and render him all manner of service. It is in the Gourou's presence alone, and with his consent, that he can eat the rice which he has begged from door to door. His distinguishing marks are to be the Pounanoul *, the book of morality which he has in his hands, a blade of grass, in form of a ring, which he puts on his finger, and a girdle of the herb Nanel; a piece of linen is to cover his nudities, and the skin of a stag is to be his bed: but above all things he must avoid any commerce with women. The heart of man is like butter, which melts at the approach of fire: by the company of women it is softened, and rendered susceptible of love. Brouma himself, being alone with his daughter, conceived and satisfied a criminal passion.

The hermit must feed only on the fruits and roots of the desarts; he may however add a little flour and rice, and eat them, after having offered them to the Supreme Being. ~~He~~ He must always seek for his food when he wants

* The Pounanoul is the string of cotton thread which the Bramins wear across them.

it, have his hair tied up, inhabit a grot, sleep on the ground, and be dressed in the bark of a tree. If he has strength enough, he ought to live twelve years in this manner ; and when he can hold out no longer, he must abstain from all nourishment, and seriously endeavour to spend the rest of his life totally absorbed in contemplating and worshipping the Supreme Being.

The Hermit, or Saniaffi, capable of leading a religious life, must have no other cloaths than a piece of linen to cover his nudities, nor any thing else but a stick and a pitcher. If he stops in a town or a village, he must remain only one night. He must meditate on the truths of the Vedams, but never dispute on the subject. He must be sober, and eat only once a day a little rice, or lentils, and wish for his last hour. If he is more enthusiastic, he ought to quit his stick and his pitcher, become dumb, deaf, stupid, and at last a fool. Heat, cold, injuries, praises, riches, and poverty, must be alike indifferent to him.

The Secular must offer to God all the good he does, and attribute none to himself ; hear devoutly

devoutly the sermons of wise men; esteem the goods of this life as a dream; have no attachment for them, not even for his wife and children; make ablutions, and say the prayers ordained, give alms, especially to the Bramins, and feed them during the time of eclipses, at the new and full moon, when the sun goes from the north to the south, and from the south to the north, the eighth and twelfth day of the moon, when it arrives with the constellation Tirouvaniam, and the ninth of the full moon of the month Cartigue*. He is moreover obliged to perform the ceremonies when his wife is with child, and for the dead; to cast the nativity of his children, and to visit the holy places. The habitation where many Bramins assemble, is

* All these days are consecrated to devotion, as well as those of the commemoration of the dead, and of the constellations under which the birth happens. It is the same with the third day after the full moon of the month Vayassi; with the seventh after the full moon of the month Maffi; with the fifteenth of the new moon of the month Pretachi, and with all the twelfth days of the moon which are in conjunction with the constellations Outram, Outradam, Outrakadi, or the months of Margazi, Tai, Maffi, and Pangouni. esteemed

esteemed very holy. The dignity of these personages is above all conception : Vichenou himself reveres them ! The dust of their feet is reverenced in heaven, on earth, and in the depths below. A sage, however, is incomparably more noble than a Bramin.

And lastly, artists are obliged to perform the duties of their calling. He who conducts himself with prudence, temperance and wisdom, if his cast is ever so low, shall be esteemed in this world, and rewarded in the other : for assuredly it is only good behaviour that makes us essentially noble ; birth being no more than an outward and arbitrary distinction.

By this exposition, we see that the morality of the Indians is very pure. They possess the same virtues as we do ; and though the greater part of the figures represented in their temples are obscene, yet decency is expressly recommended, and perfectly observed. It is the same in respect to continence ; which, however, is not so exactly kept. The facility of having dancing women, who by interest and libertinism are devoted to the public, makes them deficient in a virtue they are ordered to preserve ; yet,

yet the law, to accommodate itself to the heat of the climate, permits a plurality of wives: but they do not in common make use of this privilege, till after they have been married some years, and cannot have children by the wife they have espoused.

The principal positive virtues are gratitude and charity; and no Indian exempts himself from the last.

With regard to moral virtues, that of piety, which respects the life of all beings, is preferable to the zeal which offers them to God in sacrifice. The cows which are immolated on their altars will cause unheard of punishments to the sacrifices in the other world *. The true sacrifice is that of the soul. The ignorant address their vows to idols which the hand of man has fashioned; but the sage worships God in spirit. He who despises his body will soon triumph over his desires, and make virtue easy to him. The virtues are divided into two classes, which must not be

*be** This will lead us to imagine that the Indians anciently sacrificed animals to their gods.

confounded. The one is called Pravarty; and the other Nivarty. The first contains two articles, called Ischetam and Bourtam: Ischetam comprehends all actions done in religious ceremonies; but the building of temples, choultrie, digging tanks, planting rows of trees, &c. all such good works are called Bourtam. Those who practise them will die at the time that the sun advances towards the south, and the night of a day when the moon is in her second quarter: after their death they will find themselves in the world of the moon, where they will be happy according to their deserts.

The soul, in the state of Nivarty, burns with the fire of wisdom. Its power annihilates the actions of the senses; and this soul enters into the immensity of the universal being. All men, in the state of Nivarty, will die at the time that the sun takes his course towards the north, and the morning of the day when the moon is in the first quarter. Raised by the sun-beams, the soul will go to the Paradise of Brouma, called Satialogam, where it will enjoy those inexpressible

pressible delights possessed by the gods. The matter of which it is composed becomes subtle, and is changed into an universal body ; and the faculty of this casual body is destroyed by the wisdom of the soul.

From this delightful place it goes to the Sorgon ; from whence the followers of Vichennou pass into the Vaicondon, and the followers of Chiven into the Cailason.

Those who revere the nine Broumas will obtain the gift of progeniture. The goddess Sarassouadi will distribute riches to her worshippers. The god of fire will gratify his by the gift of beauty. Health will be the lot of those of the sun : and the gods of the eight corners of the world give to their devotees the facility of practising good works ; so that all who wish for these blessings address themselves to the particular divinities ; but those who wish to arrive at eternal felicity address themselves to God alone.

The first, who only ask temporal goods, forget that they will one day be deprived of them by death. They will then regret that they had not given their minds to the adoration

of God; without which men resemble the trees in the desert: and those who are not enlightened by this devotion, though otherways well instructed, are true beasts of burthen. The sages, who to attach themselves to God despise the goods of this world, and who ever make to him the general sacrifice of their desires, will be recompensed with glory. Their souls, free from this mortal incumbrance, will no more have the unhappiness to be born again: they will be in God, and God will be in them, and they shall possess him.

The wicked, who never have troubled themselves to contemplate the omnipotence of God, will be flung into hell, a place beneath the earth, near the south part of the world, called Padalam: rivers of fire, horrible monsters, destructive arms, infectious insects, and all sorts of evils are concentered in this terrible corner. After the death of these unfortunate people, the Emaguinguilliers* drag them, tied and bound with cords; they are

* A race of giants, servants of Yamen, god, death, and king of hell.

beat, whipped, and trod under foot; and walk on points of iron; their bodies shall be picked by crows, and gnawed by dogs; and they shall be flung into a burning river.

It is not till after these cruelties have been exercised upon them, that the ministers of death will conduct them before Yamen. This incorruptible and severe judge will condemn them according to the faults they have committed.

Those who have despised the duties of religion shall be cast on heaps of cutting arms, and suffer this torment as many years as they have hairs on their bodies.

Those who insult the Bramins, and persons in high office, shall be cut in pieces.

Adulterers shall be forced to embrace a statue made hot by fire.

Those who fail in their duty, who do not take care of their family, and who abandon them to roam about, shall be continually torn by the crows.

Those who do hurt to men, or who kill animals, shall be cast from precipices, to be tormented by wild beasts.

Those

Those who have not reverenced their parents, nor the Bramins, shall burn in a fire whose flames shall rise to ten thousand yogenais.

Those who have ill used old men and children shall be cast into furnaces.

Those who have slept in the day time with lewd women shall be forced to walk on thorns.

Slanderers and calumniators, stretched upon beds of red-hot iron, shall be obliged to eat excrements.

Misers shall serve for food to the worms.

Those who rob the Bramins shall be sawed through the middle of their bodies.

Those who, from motives of vanity, slay cows, and other animals, in the sacrifices, shall be beat on an anvil.

False witnesses shall be flung from the top of high mountains.

Lastly, the sensual, the idlers, and those who have had no pity on the poor and miserable, shall be flung into burning caverns, shall be crushed under mill-stones, and trode under foot by elephants; and their bruised and

torn

born flesh shall serve for food to those animals. All these miserable sinners shall suffer in this manner during many thousand years ; and their imperishable bodies, although divided by torments, shall re-unite as soon as quicksilver. They, afterwards, shall be condemned to a new life, during which their torments shall be lengthened, and by an effect of the divine power, they shall find themselves again in the seed of men : this seed diffused in the womb of the woman, shall be, during a whole night, like mud. The fifth day it shall be like globules of water; in the fourth month the sinews of the foetus shall be formed; in the fifth he shall experience hunger and thirst; in the sixth an epidermis shall cover his body; in the seventh he shall be sensible of motions. He will inhabit the right side of his mother, and be nourished by the suction of the nourishment she takes; reduced to flutter in his excrements, the worms shall bite him; the sharp nutriture and warm water which his mother drinks will give him acute pains: he will suffer much in his birth, and when born will be still

subject

subject to infinite pains. It is thus that this painful birth shall be renewed, 'till these unhappy creatures have the courage to give themselves up entirely to the practice of virtue.

C H A P. IX.

OF THE GANGES.

GOVERNED by the senses, and reduced to think only by their testimony, man has endeavoured to free himself from their empire, and raise himself to metaphysical ideas. But if we trace the source of these pretended sublimities, it will be soon seen, that they owe their origin alone to the perception of sensible objects. Thus, the origin of sanctifying the waters, and attributing to them the power of effacing crimes, arose from the spots on the body being seen to disappear on their application; and they believed that they would have the same effect upon the soul.

This

This error becoming general, peopled the fountains, rivers, and seas, with a crowd of imaginary deities. It was no longer permitted to pass them, without having saluted the genius of the place*. All nations claimed the advantage of possessing sacred waters.

The Jews attributed a divine virtue to the fountain of youth; the Egyptians, to the prolific sources of the Nile; and the Indians, to all the rivers, whose enchanted banks they inhabited.

What ought to be taken as an excuse for the latter, is, without doubt, the advantages they derive from them. Situated under a burning sun, consumed by the heats of a continual summer, whilst an enflamed blood circulates in their veins, how much ought they to cherish that element, which procures them such salutary coolness. It is to be presumed,

* The Ganges, the Quichena, the Pollear, the Cavri, and the Colram became holy rivers, which the Indians never cross without washing their hands in these waters, and without addressing their prayers to the subaltern deities, who inhabit them, and direct their course. The Greeks, and Egyptians, in like manner, never crossed any river, without having saluted the genius, and washed their hands in its waters.

that the first homage they gave to it was the simple tribute of acknowledgement. This disposition of the heart is so precious in man that it ought to be respected, when it is even paid to insensible beings; but the Indians have so disfigured this primitive worship, by absurd fables, that it is almost impossible to recognize it. The history of the Ganges will suffice to convince us. Here follows the manner in which it is related in the Candon.

The goddess Parvadi one day put her hands over the eyes of Chiven;—instantly, Nature was buried in darkness: the bodies, dispensers of light, lost all their brilliancy, as they received it alone from Chiven's eyes. The eyes of Chiven were, however, hid only for a single instant; but that instant was several ages for all creatures. The god saw no other remedy for this general eclipse, than to place a new eye in his forehead*; which was no sooner done, than the sun and moon resumed

* Chiven is always represented with a third eye in his front; and it is in imitation of this circumstance that his followers make a round sign, of a red colour, on their forehead, to distinguish themselves from the followers of Vichenou:

their

their primitive state. Parvadi, perceiving the disaster she had caused, took off her hands ; but she found them moistened with a sweat which she wanted to shake off, and from each finger there flowed a river of the Ganges, more considerable than the sea. These rivers increased so much, in flowing to a point, that a general inundation was feared.

In this extremity, Vichenou, Brouma, and the Deverkels, came and cast themselves at Chiven's feet, saying " Lord, we know not " what waters are now spreading over the " earth ; but they came not from the sea : if " your goodness preserves us not, the universe " will be overflowed". Chiven told them how they were formed, and ordered they should re-appear before him reduced into small quantities. He then took them and placed them on his head. On this, Vichenou, Devendren, and Brouma, prayed Chiven to give to each of them a portion of these waters ; which, proceeding from one part of himself, and placed upon his head, were become sacred. Chiven gave them some in their hands, saying, " Let each of you carry this water into his

“ own country, and it will form a great river.”

The Ganges came from the waters which Brouma obtained ; the prayers and penances of Baguiraden drew it on the earth ; the river dug its own bed, in following the ruts made by this penitent's chariot-wheels ; while he was endeavouring to re-animate the ashes of the kings his ancestors, exterminated by Cabiler.

The Bagavadam, a Pouranon in honour of Vichenou, relates this prodigy in the following manner :—Bagavadam, overcome by his enemies, took refuge in desarts, where he died : his son, Sagaren, was not born till after his decease : brought up by the care of the penitent Avourounen, he had the courage to attack, and the good fortune to conquer, his father's enemies. He soon seized on several kingdoms, and became, in the sequel, one of the six Sacravartis, or king of the whole universe. When he had completed his conquests, he espoused Soumoudy, and Quessiny : the first gave him sixty-thousand children, and the second had only one son, known by the name of Anguif-samanden.

samanden. In this excess of power and riches, he wanted to perform a hundred Asvamedagon, (or a hundred times the sacrifice of the horse) : he had already consumed ninety nine, when Devendren, excited by jealousy, stole the horse from him, which was to serve for the last ; and, not being content with this cheat, he maliciously tied it near a place where Cabiler was contemplating ; which caused the death of Sagaren's sixty thousand children : for these last, seeking about to recover the victim, found it near the penitent : and imagining that he was the thief, reproached him violently ; but Cabiler destroyed them with a single look. Sagaren, perceiving his children did not return, sent his only son that remained to seek after them ; who was not long before he brought the news of their death : with which Sangaren was so much affected, that he resigned his crown to Anguissamanden, and retired into de-farts, where he died in penance.

Anguissamanden governed during some time with glory ; but soon quitted the throne to his son Tibilen. He embraced the penitential life, believing that God, touched by his austerities, would

would grant the Ganges to him ; and that by his means he might bring his ancestors to life ; but he died without obtaining his wish. Tibilen had the same fate.

Baguiraden, at the age of sixteen, was possessed of fortitude sufficient to follow their footsteps. He summoned the goddess Genga to come on earth : she answered, that she must have the permission of Brouma : after this answer he performed a rigorous penance, in honor of this god, who told him he could not pour out this water but at the feet of Vichenou ; he performed new penances in honor of Vichenou, who informed him that the intervention of Chiven was necessary. At length, after many penances and prayers made in honor of the latter, he appeared, and granted his request. Genga received orders to follow the tracks of Baguiraden's chariot, and to perform the service he required. Baguiraden advanced forward, and Genga followed the furrows made by his chariot wheels ; they passed through the garden of the penitent Sannon. This religious man, fearing the torrent would destroy his garden, took those waters

tefs, and reducing them into a small bowl, swallowed them; Baguiraden was not discouraged by this accident; he made a rigorous penance, in honor of Sannon, who poured the Ganges out of his ear.

Baguiraden drove his chariot over the ashes of his ancestors; who, being moistened by this divine water, they, and the sixty thousand children of Sagaren, revived, and came to life; however, not to exist on earth, but in the Vaicondon. It is for this reason that the names of Sannounadi, Baguiradi, and Vichenoubadi, are given to the Ganges.

It is universally known that this river is held in great veneration throughout India: the Gentoos believe that it proceeds directly from the feet of Brouma. This sacred origin gives it great privileges. Those who die on the banks of the Ganges, in drinking its salutary waters, are exempted from the painful task of returning to this world, and retaking a new existence; for which reason, as soon as an Indian is given over by the physicians, they hurry him down to the banks of the river, where his relations make him drink repeated draughts

draughts. They even force the mud into his mouth, and the unfortunate person is choaked by the religious operation. Sometimes the body is entirely plunged into the river; which becomes its grave. Those whom distance prevents from performing this ceremony, have always by them some of the precious water, which they drink in their last agony. After they are burnt, care is taken to collect the bones which the fire has spared; and these sad remains are religiously preserved till a favorable occasion offers to throw them into the Ganges.

G H A P. X.

THE SYSTEM OF THE INDIANS.

OF THE

CREATION OF THE WORLD.

CURIOSITY, that precious source of knowledge ! more energetical, more active, and more insatiable, than any other passion with which Man is tormented,—is born with him, and ceases only with his existence. At first, curiosity is excited by the natural objects which present themselves ; whose properties, use, fulness, and relation, she endeavours to discover ; but, like those sparkling fires which give light to bodies without penetrating them, she glances over every thing and investigates nothing thoroughly. The earth soon becomes an obstruction to her boundless desires : borne on the rapid wings of thought, she dares, like the eagle, to fix her

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eyes on, and contemplate, the sun. The periodical course of this benign star, and of those which form his pompous train, offers to man an inexhaustible subject of meditation and enquiry. He carefully studies the motion of those globes which roll over his head, calculates their orbits, and draws an artificial measure of time. Ought he not to be satisfied with this knowledge? doubtless he should; but he stops not here: forgetful of his own weakness, and the limits of his understanding, he aims to trace back effects to the second causes, and at length to the first. The fall of the fathers has not corrected the children; on the contrary, it seems to have served as an incitement to make them more inquisitive and enterprizing: they wish to go back even to the creation of the world; and we find that all ancient nations have had their cosmogony, as they had their theogony, mythology, and a fabulous origin.

These cosmogonies, however different from each other, are alike equally singular and chimerical; and, beheld nearer, they form the most whimsical contrasts. The philosopher, who,

who, with the light of reason, finds the thread of Ariana, while he ventures to penetrate into the crooked paths of these Dædalian obscurities, hastens to get out of them, that he may not be crushed under the ruins of such brittle superstructures, which the lightest breath can destroy. The only benefit to be derived from them is a hopeless uncertainty, and a sentiment of pity for the authors of these wild systems.

If the cosmogonies of different nations are a series of absurdities, it is very natural to believe, that that of the Indians is not better. It is, in effect, stamped with the mark of their genius; but it has something original, which is not to be found in many others. A judgement may be formed from the following exposition.

The Indians are not agreed on the creation of the universe: some believe, that all which exists is a part of the deity: and that, at the destruction of the world, all will be reunited to that great being from which they proceed.

D d z ed

ed *. Others, on the contrary, maintain, that God made the world out of nothing. God, say they, being collected in himself, created, by his will alone, a very small atom, from which he drew four others, of the same size; afterwards collecting these five atoms together, he formed an imperceptible grain of sand: other grains, extracted from that, and combined, produced the heaven, the earth, and the sea. No traditions mention how long a time the deity employed on the creation.

According to others, the creator engendered five primitive powers, which seemed to be described under the names of five elements.

The first, called Mayessoura, is the air. The second, called Sadasiva, is the wind. The third, Roudra, is fire. The fourth, Vichenou, is water; and the fifth, Brouma, is the earth.

They commonly give to them the name of Panjacartaguel; that is to say, the five powers, or five gods. They maintain that God, by his will, drew the air from nothing; the action

* A disciple of the Brachmans, Pythagoras, taught the same doctrine. He believed that God is a universal soul, dispersed into all beings, and from which the human soul is taken. In the sequel, Stoics adopted the same principle.

of the air formed the wind; from the clashing of the air and wind fire was produced; fire, on its retreat, left a moisture, from whence water derives its origin; from the union of these powers a scum ensued; of which the fire, by its heat, composed a mass, which was the earth *. The Bramins do not say that they are five elements, but five spirits, which animate and govern them. ~~They~~

* This idea of the Indians is not more unreasonable than the system of ancient philosophers, who have given their sentiments on the creation of the world.

Heraclitus, and Hippias, have admitted fire for the only principle. Thales believed that every thing came from water; Anaximander, that infinity was the principle of every thing. Archelaus has admitted infinite air with its refraction and condensation. Pythagoras only made use of the numbers and harmony. Empedocles, of the four elements, with concord and discord. Hesiod has united the earth with the sun. Melellus-Zareta believed that light and darkness were the authors of all things. Cenopides maintained that all had been formed from air and fire. Regia, from fire and water; and Anomacrites, from water, air, and fire. Epicurus, system was chance. The Author of the System of Nature has put necessity in the place of chance. Zenon, and Spinoza, have admitted god and matter; Socrates, and Plato, have added idea. Aristotle has employed matter, form, and privation; Gassendi, a vacuum and the atoms; and Descartes, all space being filled. Our moderns, instead of creating a universe, have contented themselves with explaining

They place the first creation at a great distance. The followers of Chiven and Vichenu, who agree on this epocha, say it is 3,892,883 years since: they divide it into four ages, separated from each other by a universal deluge, which obliged the deity to a new creation. After the Candon and the Bagavadam, which I have translated, I shall give a detail of the creation of the fourth age, that the ideas of the Indians on this memorable and great event may be known; but be-

ing the revolutions which have given birth to the formation of the earth, Wiston believed that the earth has been a burning comet, which yet preserves a burning nut, round which is an abyss of water, on which the earth swims. Woodward was of the same opinion. Bourget thought that the earth has been in a fluid state, that the fire has inserted itself; which will consume it, and one day destroy it with a great explosion. Leibnitz believed that the earth was, a sun, extinguished, for want of combustible matter; and that it is nothing but glass differently modified. Majlet has made a sun, and then a planet entirely covered with water; attributing to the currents of the sea and to their sediments the different revolutions of the earth. Mr. Bonet makes it consist of a fluid mass, where the bodies being fixed on account of their gravity, have formed seas and continents. And lastly, the opinion of Mr. de Buffon is, that the earth and the other planets are part of the sun furrowed by the meeting of a comet, which has caused a torrent of matter to flow, that has formed all the globes which gravitate round the sun.

fore

fore I begin, I think I ought to anticipate my readers, on the barrenness of this subject; they must arm themselves with patience and resolution, as the dryness of the matter is impossible to be avoided.

SYSTEM OF THE CREATION ACCORDING TO THE CANDON.

The Candon relates, that after the total destruction of the universe, at the end of the third age, God, who had remained like a flame or a light, willed that the world should resume its primitive state. He divided himself into two persons; one male, under the name of Parachiven*; and the other, female, under that of Parafati †;—he then created Nadou, who created Vindou, from whom sprang Sadachiven, who begot Mayessoura, who begot Routren ‡, who gave birth to Vichenou, from whose navel came Brouma. Brouma being charged to create the world, after hav-

* One of the names of Chiven.

† One of the names of Parvadi.

‡ These five names are among the number of those under which Chiven is adored.

ing made his reflections on the subject, drew forth from his heart seven persons ; who are, Narissen, Anguia, Poulatien, Poulaguin, Keradou, Atri, and Chanabadi. From the toe of his right foot came Takin, and from his stomach Pirougou *.

Takin had fifty daughters, all of whom he married ; viz. ten to different Deverkels and penitents ; thirteen to Cassiapen, a famous penitent ; and twenty-seven to Sandrin, or the moon.

Samboudi, one of the first ten daughters of Takin, married Narissen, the eldest of the seven persons who came from the heart of Brouma. By this marriage, they had four children, the eldest of which was Cassiapen : another of Takin's daughters was married to Pirougou, who had by her Cavi, Chavaner, and Latchimi, the wife of Vichenou.

* These nine persons were great penitents, who obtained immortality and mighty power. They are vulgarly called the ten Broumas, because they comprehend Brouma. This immortality is limited to the duration of the natural day of Brouma, which is that of four ages, that is to say, 4,320,000 years. When this god sleeps, all that he has created is destroyed.

Cavi, the eldest of the two boys, was the father of Chouctin or Venus. Another daughter of Takin, called Miroudi, married Anguira; from this union several Grandouvers* were born.

Anouffougee, another daughter of Takin, was married to Atri, and bore him Chandrin, Sani †, Chatinerin, and Sangatalin.

Marichandali, another of his daughters, married Poulatien, who was the father of the Rachaders ‡, the Vanaringuels §, and the Guinerers ||.

Pindi, another of Takin's daughters, married Poulaguin, and was the mother of the Guimbourouders ¶, and of all animals.

Ourche, another of Takin's daughters, married Vassister, the Gourou of Rama.

* A tribe of Deverkels: they are genii.

† This is the planet which presides over Saturday, and is the god who punishes mankind during life.

‡ A race of giants.

§ They are apes.

|| One of the tribes of the Deverkels: they are the gods of musical instruments.

¶ Another tribe of the Deverkels, who are the gods of singing.

Souave, another of his daughters, married Aguini, god of fire, and had three very valiant and strong children.

Came, another of Takin's daughters, had three children by her husband Keradou.

And last of all, Souade married Pidera, and brought forth several daughters.

Chanabadi was the father of several Grandouvers, and Achetevassoukels *.

Of the thirteen daughters of Takin, married to Cassiapen, the eldest, called Adidi, brought forth the Deverkels.

The second wife of Cassiapen, named Didi, had two sons, Erenien and Erenachaden †. Erenien had five children, of whom the eldest is Pragualaden, who had three children ; the eldest of them, called Virogenin, became father of Mahabely. Vanajouren his son was so devout, and performed such great penances, that God raised him to mighty power, so that Brouma cast himself at his feet.

* A tribe of the Deverkels.

† These two Rachaders were kings of their tribe, and committed so many crimes, that Vichenou killed them.

Tanou,

Tanou, the third wife of Cassiapen, had forty children, all Rachaders; the eldest of them was Chambarin.

His fourth wife, called Singinde, was delivered of four Rachaders, the eldest of whom were Ragou and Quedou*.

The fifth, sixth, and seventh, called Pynne, Yane, and Yagou, had, all three, some Rachaders.

The eighth, called Kale, brought forth six Calegueirs †.

The ninth, called Vinde, had six children, of which the eldest were Gueroudin, and Arounin ‡.

The tenth, Catrou, was the mother of all snakes.

* These two Rachaders were metamorphosed into snakes one red and one black. They are enemies to the sun and moon, who prevented them from swallowing a portion of the Amourdon, or butter of immortality. According to the Indians, eclipses happen at the time these snakes attack the sun and moon.

† One of the race of giants, but the most terrible and powerful. They inhabit the Padalon.

‡ One of the Deverkels, who is represented lame. He is the conductor of the sun's chariot.

The eleventh, called Arite, had twelve lovely daughters, the eldest of whom, called Arambe, is the dancer of the Deverkels.

The twelfth, Ilangueje, produced an infinity of Grandouvers.

The thirteenth, Cabilé, had ten children.

Chandren had no children by his twenty-seven wives: but having obtained great powers by the sacrifice of Ragesouge-Yagon *, he abused them to take away Tarre, wife of Perefouadi, his Gourou, as well as those of all the Deverkels. These, provoked at a conduct so reprehensible, obliged Chandrin to give up Tarre; but Perefouadi, her husband, before he would receive her back, ordered her to get rid of the child if she was quick by a stranger. Tarre obeyed, and produced so lovely a boy, that the Gourou was extremely sorry not to have been the father.

This child, who was called Bouda, became the first of the kings of the race of the moon.

* One of the greatest sacrifices which can be made. No superior, nor any other person powerful enough to hinder it, must be present.

The

The wife of Chourien * not being able to bear the ardour of her husband, left by his side a phantom of a figure like her own, and disguising herself under the form of a mare, retired to Courchetron †, to perform penance: Chourien perceiving what was done, changed himself into a horse, and went to find his wife, who conceiving, brought forth the Maroutoukels ‡, and many other things. It is in this manner the beings have multiplied.

SYSTEM OF THE CREATION ACCORDING TO THE BAGAVADAM.

The Bagavadam relates, that at the beginning of time, when all the universe remained in the substance of Vichenou, this god found himself in the drowsiness of a contemplative slumber, reposing on the serpent Adissechen, extended on the sea of milk; and having wisdom and power alone for his companions, he

* One of the Deverkels: it is the sun.

† A province of Indostan, famous for the battles of Dama-raja.

‡ A tribe of the Deverkels; they are but two.

in this manner passed a thousand divine years. At the end of this time, he designed to create the universe anew. Immediately a stalk of Tamarey * came from his navel, which bore a flower that expanded itself at the rays of the divine sun, which is Vichenou. In this flower was Brouma created, who wanting to dive into the secret of his origin, walked for a long time in the hollow of the stalk, without being able to reach the beginning. Fatigued with this fruitless search, he returned back again, and sat down on the flower, invoking the Creator. At the end of one thousand divine years' penitence, he found himself filled with a celestial light ; God appeared to him : Brouma prostrated himself, adored the Lord, and sung his praises. “ Oh Brouma, my dear child ! (said God unto him,) I grant my favours unto you, and give you the power of creating the universe †. In my bosom I

“ keep

* Nelumbo of Linnæus.

† The Indians, we find, attribute, then, the creation of the world to Brouma, as the son of god. In this respect they are of the same sentiment as all the philosophers who have not admitted

“ keep in private the universe, and the lives
“ of all creatures. I command you to pro-
“ duce them, or rather to unfold them, and
“ that for our pleasure; for I am in all things
“ living, and all things living are in me.”

Encouraged by such singular favours, Brouma recommenced his penance to prepare for so great a work. One hundred divine years, passed in contemplation and prayer, greatly increased his power and wisdom. He drank all the water of the sea, under which the world was absorbed, and saw the earth rising out of the waters. He immediately began by establishing the Sorgon, and Padalon; next he created the gods, men, and animals; and

admitted the eternity of the world. All acknowledge God himself, or his son, for the creator. Aristotle, in his Book of the World, says, that it was an ancient tradition among the people, that the world was the work of God. Thales, Pythagoras, Cicero, and many others, confirm this opinion. In this respect their belief was conformable to holy writ. It is said in St. John, chap. 1. that God created the world by his son.—Hermes-Trigemiste said, that God (to whom he attributes, like the Indians, the conjunctive virtues of male and female) had engendered another god, who had created the world and all that it contains,

lastly,

lastly, plants, trees, and mountains *. Brouma, in continuing his work, suffered himself to be swayed by some irregular passions: he created some beings tainted with sin. He corrected himself by repentance, and had recourse to the deity. He then produced Sanguen, Sananaden, Sanarcomaren, and Sanartchoussaden, four penitents, endowed with virtue. He ordered them to procreate the human race; but having given themselves up to contemplation from their birth, they refused. Brouma enraged, caused Routren to come out of his forehead, and commanded him to reside in the sun, moon, wind, fire, space, earth, water, life, penance; in the heart, and in sounds. Routren metamorphosed himself under eleven forms, of which each bears the name of one of the eleven forms

* In another passage of the Bagavadam, on the creation, it is said, that Vichenou produced the three powers or qualities, Tamadam, Vassadam, and Satrigam; and by them several bodies proportioned to gods, men, giants, birds, and animals, &c. &c. The space was created from thought: which space created the wind; and wind, fire; the fire, water; and the water, the earth. The union of these elements formed all sorts of sensible and insensible beings.

of Routrens : they are creatures proceeding from an act of the volition of Routren, who produced an infinity of others, by the same method. These, becoming wicked, led a perverse life ; but, being restrained by Brouma, they became penitent.

Brouma resolved to create men of a mild and amiable character, wise and endowed with all sorts of virtue : he drew Takin from his toe, Poulaguin from his navel, Poulatien from his ear, Pirougou from his shoulders, Keradou from his hands, Chanabadi from his face, Anguira from his nose, Narissen from his spirit, and Atri from his eyes. These nine persons, are called the nine Broumas.

Darmadeve, or Virtue, was born from the right side of Brouma's breast ; Adarmen, or Vice, from his back ; and his heart produced Manmadin, god of love. Anger came from between his eye-brows ; Avarice from his lips ; the goddess of sciences, or Saraffouadi, from his face ; his private parts gave birth to Varounin, god of the sea, and Nirouti, king of the Demons : and lastly, his features created the Patriarch Cartamen.

Brouma, becoming enamoured with Saraf-souadi, had commerce with her. This action drew on him the reproaches and contempt of the nine Broumas. Humbled, by being despised, stung with remorse of conscience, he quitted the body with which he had committed incest. This body, thus abandoned, occasioned mists and darkness. Brouma took another body with four faces, which have produced the four Vedams, and the sciences. He also stripped himself of this body, and took possession of another; and, wanting to establish a commerce of union between the two sexes to propagate mankind, he created Souba-Yambou-Manou, and a woman called Sadaroubay. The offspring of their love were two boys, Priaviraden, and Outana-Baden; and three daughters, named Aghdy, Davaghdy, and Prassoudy. Aghdy was married to Rouffiguene; Davaghdy to Cartamen; and Prassoudy to Takin. These three races have peopled the universe. Brouma blessed Souba-Yambou-Manou, and said unto him, multiply. Souba represented to him that he could not put his foot on any part of the earth, the earth being

ing covered with water. Brouma addressed his prayers to Vichenou, who took the form of a wild boar; and with his tusks drew the earth out of the water.

In the beginning Brouma had created some beings with evil qualities; but seeing the faults of such creation, he suppressed them. However, these beings, notwithstanding their short existence, produced fatal effects, in giving birth to several millions of races of giants. Brouma then took a more perfect body, which he left, after having created an infinity of deities.

The giants created by Brouma were so vicious that they wanted to copulate with Brouma himself; and the god, perceiving he was furiously followed, left the body he had recently taken. This divine quittance gave birth to a girl perfectly beautiful named Sauditia-Divi; whom the giants enjoyed. Brouma, having taken another body, produced the Grandouers, and several women. To this body he substituted another more light and invisible, with which he created the gods called Petrous; whose bodies were invisible: they were destined to be fed by the offerings made to the gods.

Brouma, with a body still more perfect, created the Viteaders: and, with another, the Guinerers, and Guimbourouders: but perceiving these beings did not multiply agreeable to his wishes, he was displeased. This sign of anger made some of his hairs to shake, which occasioned the motion of time and of ages. This last work gave great joy to Brouma, and such was the pleasure he received, that the Bramarichys came out of his heart. Cartamen, one of them, being born immediately from Brouma, invoked Vichenou, and asked of him the power of propagating his species. Vichenou, satisfied by his penances, appeared to him, by the river Bindou; and foretold him that Soubayambou-Manou was coming with her daughter Divaghdy, to give her to him in marriage: that by her he should have nine daughters, and should marry them to the Bramarichys, and that he, Vichenou, would become his son, under the name of Cabiler, to instruct him in the truth and to save him. In effect, this marriage was performed. The patriarch, for some time put the obedience of his wife to the test; and being satisfied with

her

her submission, he took the figure of a handsome man, to cohabit with her.

Divaghdy conceived nine daughters at the same time, and brought them into the world; she afterwards was delivered of a boy, which was Vichenou himself, under the name of Cabiler: on this birth, the heavenly regions resounded with joy. Brouma and all the patriarchs came and paid homage to the newborn infant.

In the sequel, the daughters were given in marriage to the primitive patriarchs. Narifson chose the eldest for his wife, who was called Calcy; Atri espoused Anoufoucy; Aguira took Stratey; Avir-Pousey was united to Poulatien; Quedy became the wife of Poulaguen; Criey was married to Keradou; and Quiady to Pirougou; Vassister espoused Arounoudy, and Charnabady, another daughter, called Sandy.

Aghdy, married to Rouffiguen, had a son called Equien, which was Vichenou himself. He espoused Bad-Mana-Bavady, and Latchemi: these two sisters produced twelve deities, who had a numerous posterity.

The

✓ 220

The third daughter Soubayambou-Manou, called Prassoudi, who had espoused Takin, was the mother of a great many children, who multiplied and filled the heavens, the earth, and the deep.

C H A P. XI.

THE SYSTEM OF THE INDIANS ON THE DURATION OF THE WORLD, AND ITS DIFFERENT AGES.

THE Tamouls divided the duration of the world into four ages. Three ages are already elapsed; the fourth is to last a certain number of years. When they are finished, the world will end, to recommence in its former state.

The duration of the past three ages, and of the fourth, called Calyougam, are calculated in the following manner *: The time that is

* This calculation is extracted from the Candon, one of the Pouranons in honor of Chiven.

necessary

necessary for the middle finger, resting on the thumb, to be taken off quickly, is an instant, equal to the twinkling of an eye: this time is called Matire; two Matires makes one Chipouron; ten Chipourons, one Chenon; twelve Chenons, one Vinadigue; sixty Vinadigues, one Najigue; seven Najigues and a half, one Samon; eight Samons, one day, of twenty-four hours; fifteen days, one Parouvon; two Parouvons, one month; twelve months, one year. One hundred years is the common term of the life of man. These hundred years multiplied by 360, (because each year contains so many days,) make 36,000. This number multiplied by six, on account of the six subdivisions, Matire, Chipourons, &c. &c. makes 216,000; which is the basis of the calculations respecting the duration of the four ages. This number multiplied by 2, on account of the quality of virtues and of vices, gives the number of 432,000; which expresses the duration of the Calyougam, or fourth and actual age: multiplied by 4, on account of the Four Vedams, makes 864,000; which is the number of years of the Tou-
vabara.

vabarayougam, or third age: multiplied by 6, on account of the six Chastrons, 1,296,000; which is the number of the years of the Tredayougam, or second age. And lastly, multiplied by 8, in honour of the eight corners of the world, it produces 1,728,000; being the number of years of the Credayougam, or the first age. The united years of these four ages make the number of 4,320,000, called Sadriyougam; that is to say, the four ages of the world.

The first age was in every respect perfect. Its name, Credayougam, signifies the age of innocence; and answers to the golden age of the ancients. At that time Virtue reigned under the form of a cow. According to the Indians, she was strong on the earth, and walked on four feet.—In the second age, which represents the silver age, she became weak, and walked only on three legs. In the third age, which is that of brafs, she was reduced to walk on two. And lastly, in this present age, which is the iron age, she rests upon

upon one foot only. They call it Calyougam, or the age of misery and misfortune *.

The year 1782 corresponds with the year 4883 of the fourth age; therefore, according to this calculation, 3,892,883 years have passed since the creation of the world.

Two thousand Sadry-Ougams, that is to say, 8,640,000,000 years, make one day and one night of Brouma; or twenty four of his hours. After a thousand Sadry-Ougams, this god falls asleep; all that he has created is destroyed, and remains annihilated during his sleep, which lasts one thousand Sadry-Ougams, or 4,320,000,000 years. When he awakes, he creates anew the gods, the giants, men, and animals. Sixty thousand Sadry-Ougams are one month of Brouma; twelve such months, one of his years; and one hundred years are the term of his life.

The duration of the life of Brouma makes only one day of Vichenou's existence:—thirty of such days form one of his months, and twelve months, one of his years. This god

* Caly signifies epocha, and Ougam, misfortune.

will die at the period of one hundred years. At his death, all things on earth and nature itself will be consumed by fire :—Chiven alone will then exist, and even Chiven will lose the different forms he had taken while the world subsisted. He will then become like a flame, and diffuse himself over the world, at that time reduced to ashes *.

On the death of Brouma, all the worlds will suffer a deluge; all the Andons be broken; and the Cailafson and the Vaicondon will only remain. At that time Vichenou, taking a leaf of the tree called Allemaron †, will place himself on the leaf, under the figure of a very little child, and thus float on the sea of milk, sucking the toe of his right foot. He will remain in this posture till Brouma, anew, comes forth from his navel in a tamarind flower. It is thus that the ages and worlds succeed each other, and are perpetually renewed.

* We see that this is the system of a Chivabater, because it acknowledges Chiven for the only god who exists after the death of Brouma and Vichenou.

† This tree is the *Ficus admirabilis* of Linnæus. They call it the great fig-tree of the pagodas; and it also is the banyan tree.

In several temples they adore Vichenou, under the figure just mentioned, and to which they give the name of Vatapatrachai. The Indians have always in their houses a picture which represents this god, under such a form. Vatapatrachai is esteemed by the followers of Vichenou as the Supreme Being, born co-equal with time.

The Indians have a memorable epocha in the fourth age, which they call Salivagana-Sagaptam, or the æra of Salivagana, and from which they reckon their years. This epocha dates from the death of Salivagana, king of Visnagar, which happened in the 3179th year of the fourth age, and corresponds with the 78th year of the Christian æra. This king, who was of low extraction, became a most powerful sovereign, and exterminated the famous and royal races who descended from the sun and the moon. He was a lover of sciences, the restorer of astronomy, and protector of the Bramin; who, willing to perpetuate his memory, made an epocha of his death. According to some, it was this king who divided the Choutres in different castes.

The almanac of the Tamouls is also regulated upon the æra of Salivagana, and made after the calculations of the Chastrons. They call it Pandjangam, which means the five members, on account of the five things it contains; viz. 1st, the Tidi, or age of the moon:—2dly, the Quijemes, which are the days of the week:—3dly, the Natchetron, or the constellation in which the moon is found:—4thly, the Yogan:—5thly, the Carenon. In these almanacs are also found the days of the months, the eclipses, &c. &c.

I shall finish this chapter by some reflections on the two important points of the doctrine above mentioned.

Fire consumes the universe at the death of Vichenou. Here the Bramins agree, without exception, with all nations who have believed that the world will perish by fire. What can be the reason of an opinion so generally adopted? It is, doubtless, a simple and universal fact. Fire was soon known as a destroying agent, against which nothing in nature could resist: from that time they were led to believe, that a conflagration would destroy the world.

world. The volcanos which so often overturned the globe, have been looked upon as the forerunners of this future and terrible catastrophe. They have confirmed mankind in this fear, if they did not even give birth to it. Such, does it appear to me, has been the origin of this prejudice, common to all nations. All other causes that may be assigned it are less probable, as well as less natural.

The different stages of calculating the duration of time, among the Indians, deserves our attention. Examination will show the ingenuity of the system, which, at first, appears the offspring of a wandering imagination.

We have seen that the twinkling of an eye, which is the least subdivision of time, serves as a unit to measure all quantities of this kind. The Sadry-Ougam, or the four ages of the world, last 4,320,000 years. One day and one night of Brouma, is two thousand Sadry-Ougams, or four and twenty hours of that god. Thirty days of Brouma, or sixty thousand Sadry-Ougams, make one of his months; twelve of them, form one of his years, and one hundred years are the term of his life; as an hundred

hundred years are the period of the life of man. The duration of the life of Brouma makes only one day of that of Vichenou:—this day is of the same principle of the months, years, and of the life of Vichenou, and follows in the same order, as those of Brouma. This recapitulation is indispensable, in order to understand what follows.

Man, and the giants, are mortal; the earth which they inhabit is also to perish; but, like the phoenix, she rises to life again from her own ashes. Brouma, creator of the earth, dies for an instant. Vichenou, the father of Brouma, pays also a transitory tribute to death. Chiven alone enjoys the privilege of immortality. The Indians, having established a gradual chain of beings from men up to Chiven, have measured the life of each of these beings, according to their respective power: thus, in Homer, the stature and strength of the gods is proportioned to the rank they hold. Brouma, creator of the universe, ought to have a duration infinitely longer than that of the world, whose four ages are only equal to one of his days. The whole life

life of Brouma, inferior to Vichenou, must, for the same reason, form but one day of Vichenou. The life of the latter ought equally to have its limits, because it is subordinate to Chiven, the only immortal being. This system, according to the principles of the Indians, is very reasonable, and has arisen in consequence of their having invented a particular stage for the duration of each of these beings, though all the stages have the twinkling of an eye for their first and common principle. We practise the same method, in our different divisions of time:—we count by seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, lustrums, ages, &c. &c.

One single example will evidently shew the exactness of the Indian method. Cetaceous creatures live several ages, while the life of ephemeral insects lasts but a few hours. If we consider the life of the whale, and that of the smallest worm, each divided into a number of parts called days, the days of the worm must amount to a great number, in order to make one day of a whale.

It

It is not, however, quite sufficient to have shewn that the numbers which the Bramins attribute to the duration of the world, and to its different ages, (although chimerical) are very skilfully combined; we must also shew, after the calculations and discoveries of Mr. Le Gentil *, that all these numbers are astronomical periods, formerly in use among the Chaldeans, who in all probability took them from the Bramins; if we had not rather believe that both the one and the other received them from a more ancient people. Let the matter rest as it will, the following table will incontestably prove the truth of the assertion, however strange it may appear.

According to the Bramins the precession of the equinoxes, or annual motion of the fixed stars, from the west into the east, is fifty four seconds (1 year); (we find them to be of fifty seconds thirty tierces, or very near a degree in sixty years); from thence they form a cycle of sixty years, during which the fixed stars change in longitude of fifty four minutes (60

* Voyage to the Indies, vol. 1. page 321—353.

years).

years). Berosus, a Chaldean author, who lived three hundred years before our æra, calls this cycle Soffos.

The Bramins make use of a period, the unisolar of six hundred years, which Berosus calls Neros; and Josephus the great year. In effect, the period of sixty years with that of six hundred, has the same relation as the numbers 432,000 and 4,320,000, of which the Bramins make use in their astronomical calculations. These periods contain a determined number of time; the anomalistic period of two hundred and forty eight days, which the Bramins make use of for the motion of the moon and its apogee, supposed to part at the same time, from the same point, and to move in the same way, to meet at the end of two hundred and forty eight days, at the same hour, and at the same point from whence they set out.

	<small>DEGREES.</small>	<small>YEARS.</small>
The fixed stars advancing 54 minutes in 60 years, their progress will be in 3600 years of - - - - -	54	3600

This period is called Saros
by Berosus; therefore the
fixed stars, in 24,000 years,
make their entire revolution,
or - - - - - 360 24,000

Nine of these revolutions
make - - - - - 216,000

But it is to be observed,
that the period of 60 years,
and that of 600 years, re-
duced into days of 360 in the
the year, gives the numbers
21,600, and 216,000; of
which the last expresses the
years here marked.

This, multiplied by 2, fur-
nishes the duration of the
4th age, or Calyougam - - - . 432,000

Berosus also speaks of the astronomical ob-
servations made by the ancient Chaldeans, du-
ring the same number of years, viz. 432,000;
but Mr. Le Gentil proves extremely well, that
the ancients supposed, in their calculations,
that

that the year had three hundred and sixty days, and divided into a thousand equal parts; therefore the 432,000 years of the Chaldeans were no more than 432; and the 720,000, which some authors mention, only 720, as we may read it in Pliny.

THE FOURTH AGE,

YEARS.

Multiplied by 2, gives for the 3d,	864,000
Multiplied by 3, gives for the 2d,	1,296,000
Multiplied by 4, gives for the 1st,	1,728,000

Therefore these ages contain

The 1st, - 4 periods	of -	432,000
2d, - 3 do.		
3d, - 2 do.		
4th, - 1 do.		

These ten periods make - - - 4,320,000

We must here remark that the figures 4, 3, and 2, which express the relation of the three first ages, being written thus 4, 3, 2, make 432; which corresponds with the four hundred and thirty two years of the astronomical observations of the Chaldeans: and supposing each of these years divided into a

H h 2 thousand

thousand parts, we shall find 432,000, a number equal to Calyougam.

However prodigious these numbers are, and more so those of the lives of Brouma and Vichenou, we should never forget that they take their rise from the precession of equinoxes of fifty-four seconds, more or less times repeated; these monstrous numbers will then cease to appear absurd.

From this general division of the duration relative to all beings, from the creator to man, we will now proceed to the common and civil division of time among the Indians.

C H A P. XII.

DIVISION OF THE AGES, YEARS, MONTHS, AND DAYS.

BESIDES the epocha of Salivagana, the Indians have a period of sixty years*, each

* This period is also astronomical. The fixed stars changing, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, 54 seconds in longitude,

each of which is marked by some specific name. They use these names only in particular acts, bills of exchange, and notes of hand for money borrowed, to note the year in which the contract was made; but in family concerns, which are for perpetuity, as well as in the inscriptions of temples, they join to the name of the year, the year of the æra of Sali-vagana, and that of the fourth age.

*Names of the Years of the Period of
Sixty Years.*

1. Praba.	9. Hyouva.
2. Ibava.	10. Dadon.
3. Soucoula.	11. Itchoura.
4. Pramadouda.	12. Begoudamia.
5. Prassor-Podi.	13. Pramadi.
6. Anguira.	14. Vicrema.
7. Strinouga.	15. Vetchou,
8. Bava.	16. Sittravanon.

longitude, each year, it follows, that at the end of sixty years they have travelled 54 minutes. From hence the Indians have drawn the cycle here mentioned, which exactly divides the grand period of 24,000 years, during which time the entire revolution of the heavens is made.

17. Souvanon.

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27. Souvanon.	39. Vichoua-Vichou.
28. Danna.	40. Parabava.
29. Partiva.	41. Paravangal.
30. Viam.	42. Klelega.
31. Sarvajetton.	43. Chaomia.
32. Sarvadari.	44. Sadamia.
33. Virodi.	45. Virodigredou.
34. Vigourdi.	46. Pavadabi.
25. Kara.	47. Pramadetche.
26. Manudana,	48. Ananda.
27. Vigea.	49. Ratchada.
28. Gea.	50. Nafla.
29. Manmada.	51. Pringala.
30. Dounmougui.	52. Calcavouta.
31. Jevalambi.	53. Sitravachi.
32. Velembi.	54. Raoutri.
33. Vigari.	55. Douamadi.
34. Charvari.	56. Doundoumi.
35. Palapava.	57. Rotrocari.
36. Soupagredou.	58. Ratratchemi.
37. Soubagredou.	59. Crodana.
38. Crodi.	60. Atchieia.

The year 1782 corresponds with the year of Soupagredou of this period, and commenced

meanced the 19th April, at twelve naijigues, that is to say, at ten hours and forty-eight minutes in the morning. This year is the seventeen hundred and fourth of the era of Salivagana, and the four thousand eight hundred and eighty-third of the fourth age of the world.

The Indian year is solar, and divided into twelve months. According to the most received opinion, it is composed of three hundred and sixty-five days, seventeen naijigues and thirty-three vinajigues, which make three hundred and sixty-five days, seven hours, one minute, and twelve European seconds*. The year having, as above mentioned, some hours more than three hundred and sixty-five days, the Tamouls, who are ignorant of the bissextiles or leap years, have found no other method to make the years equal than to distribute the

* The syderal year of the Bramins, according to Mr. Le Gentil (vol. 1. page 230) consists of 365 days, 15 hours, 31 minutes, 15 Indian seconds; — which are equal to 365 days, 6 hours, 12 minutes, and 30 European seconds. There are years, it is true, which contain the same number of days, hours, minutes and seconds; but there are also others which have more or less.

hours to every month; which is the reason that the months are not all years of equal length. It is also one of the methods the Bramins make use of to render themselves absolutely necessary, and keep the unhappy people in the greatest spiritual subjection. Those who know something of India are not surprized at the superstition which reigns. The ignorance and apathy of its inhabitants will always keep them under the yoke of those who call themselves the agents of the Divinity. Notwithstanding we have already said, that according to the most common opinion, the year consists of three hundred and sixty-five days and seventeen najigues, and thirty-three vinajigues, yet there are years which have exactly three hundred and sixty-five days, and others that have more or less najigues.

The Indians are perhaps the only people who begin their year and month at different hours of the day. Their first month is in our month of April.

Although the Indian year contains the same number of days as ours, our months do not correspond with theirs, neither for the number

ber of days, as they have thirty-two; nor for the commencement, as they fall sometimes on the seventh and sometimes on the thirteenth of our months. Further, the Indians divide the year into two equal parts, each of six months, to reckon the progress of the sun towards the south, and his return towards the north. This part of the sun's return into the north, which is called Outraïnon, begins the first day of the month of Tai, and ends the last of the month of Ani; the other part, which is called Dechanaion, begins the first of the month Addi, and ends the last of the month Margazi.

Names of the Twelve Months.

Chittere,	April,	according to the common computation,	has	31 Days.
Vayassi,	May, also,	- - -	31	
Ani,	June,	- - -	32	
Addi,	July,	- - -	31	
Avani,	August,	- - -	31	
Pretachi,	September,	- - -	31	
Arpichi,	October,	- - -	30	
Cartigue,	November,	- - -	29	
VOL. I.	ii		Margazi,	

Margazi,	December,	- - -	30	Days.
Tai,	January,	- - -	29	
Maffi,	February,	- - -	30	
Pangoumi,	March,	- - -	30	

I have not added the hours, minutes and seconds, which each month ought to have, because they vary every year.

It is the Bramins of Tanjour, and of the temple of Canjivaron, who every year fix the moments in which the year and months begin; they make and distribute the Panjanguans, which all the inhabitants of the Carnatic follow.

The Tamouls divide the day into sixty parts, or little hours, called najigues. The first begins at sun-rise; and the thirtieth, at his setting; the other thirty commence at sun-set, and end at his rising the day following. Thus, the najigues, like the Italian hours, are not equal all the year. In general, two najigues and a half answer to one of our hours.

A najigue is subdivided into three hundred and sixty parts, called Nodi, or Lipitam.

Sometimes

Sometimes they divide the day into eight watches, which they call Chamam, or Yamam, of which, four are for the day, and four for the night.

The days of the week are called Kijamai, or Varam. They are, like ours, consecrated to the planets. To express each day, they add Kijamai to the name of the planet to which it is appropriated.

Nair	signifies	Sun.	Nair	Kijamai	signifies	Sunday.
Tinguel	- - -	The Moon	Tinguel	Kijamai	- - -	Monday.
Chevoai	- - - -	Mars.	Chevoai	Kijamai	- - - -	Tuesday.
Bouda	- - -	Mercury.	Bouda	Kijamai	- - -	Wednesday.
Vingam	- - -	Jupiter.	Vingam	Kijamai	- - -	Thursday.
Velli	- - -	Venus.	Velli	Kijamai	- - -	Friday.
Sani	- - -	Saturn.	Sani	Kijamai	- - - -	Saturday.

C H A P. XIII.

OF LUCKY AND UNLUCKY DAYS,

IN GENERAL, errors are nothing else than the abuse of some true principle. It was scarcely suspected that the motion of the stars could have any influence on terrestrial beings; but when men bewildered themselves

in the reveries of judicial astrology, they wanted that moral and physical phenomenons should be explained by the same causes; and the planets became the book of fates. A crowd of impostures persuaded the people that they had the secret of unfolding their destiny, and their assertions were soon credited; from whence sprung soothsayers and sorcerers; who have dispersed themselves among all nations, to foretel things to come, and to announce the lucky and unlucky days*. The Bramins, interested to perpetuate the empire of superstition, yearly labour to mark the days of felicity and misfortune, from which they direct the actions of the Indians.

* The Egyptians had days on which they did not dare to undertake any thing; and the study of their priests, as well as those of the Greeks and Romans, was to read in the planets the good and bad auguries. The Chinese undertake nothing, if the tortoise or the characters of Confucius, which they consult every morning, prognosticate an unlucky day. The Gauls also consulted the soothsayers: they observed the auguries, and did not dare to stir out on certain days of the moon, and of the week. In that happy age, when France was governed by a great king, Mary de Medicis, and all the court, consulted astrologers; and, like the Indians, Chinese, Africans, and Americans, wore amulets to make them fortunate.

According

According to this calculation, there every day happens one Natchetron, one Yogan, one Tidi, two Carenons, twelve Laquenons, one Ragoucalou, one Couliguen, and sometimes one Vartchion. The Natchetrons, and the Yogens are to the number of twenty seven; they being at different hours of the day, and last each sixty najigues, or twenty four hours. This is what we learn from the Pandjangans.

The Tidi lasts also sixty najigues, and begins with the moon, or sooner. The Tidis are the names of the days of the moon. They reckon fourteen, without comprehending the new and the full moon, which have particular names. The same Tidis return after the full moon into the same rank from whence they passed after the new, and it is the Pandjangans also which announce the hour of the beginning of the Tidi.

The Laquenons are the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and last altogether sixty najigues. On the first najigue of the day begins the Laquenon of the month, and the others succeed till the day following.

The

The Ragoucalou, and the Couliguen, last only three najigues three quarters in the sixty ; and they are daily at fixed hours.

The Vartchion, which comes only on a certain day, marked by the Pandjangans, in like manner lasts only three najigues three quarters.

Among the Natchetrons, the Yogons, the Tidis, the Laquenons, the Carenons, and the days of the week, there are good and bad : if the greater number is good, the day is not unlucky ; and it is the contrary, if it is unfortunate. The Ragoucalou is always bad, and the Coliguen always good ; while it lasts, no melancholy service can be performed, such as prayers and ceremonies for the dead.

The Vartchion is dreadful ; and, for the time of its duration, the Indians desist from all undertakings, even if their fortune was interested.

We are now going to begin by the days of the week, which we shall be obliged to recapitulate, in order to distinguish the good and the bad, as well as the hours where Ragoucalou and the Couliguen happen.

			HOURS IN WHICH THE COULIGUEN BEGINS.	HOURS IN WHICH THE RAGOUCALOU BEGINS.
Sunday.	Nair.	Bad.	at 22 najigues $\frac{1}{2}$	at 26 najigues $\frac{1}{2}$
Monday.	Tinguel.	Good.	at 18 - - - $\frac{3}{4}$	at 3 - - - $\frac{3}{4}$
Tuesday.	Chevoai.	Bad.	at 15 - - - 11	at 22 - - - $\frac{1}{2}$
Wednesday.	Bouda.	Good.		
	Bodin.		at 11 - - - $\frac{1}{4}$	at 15 - - - 11
Thursday.	Viagam.	Good.	at 7 - - - $\frac{1}{2}$	at 18 - - - $\frac{3}{4}$
Friday.	Velli.	Good.	at 3 - - - $\frac{3}{4}$	at 11 - - - $\frac{1}{4}$
Saturday.	Sani.	Bad.	at 1 - - - 11	at 7 - - - $\frac{1}{2}$

The Natchetrons are, according to the Indians, twenty-seven stars which the moon successively travels through, and stays in each of them twenty four hours or sixty najigues. It is for this reason that they call them houses of the moon, and consecrate to each in particular a quadruped, a bird, and a tree, the same as the syllables of their tongue; so that the names which begin by such or such syllable, belong to such a Natchetron. We shall distinguish them, according to their rank, in joining to each the animals and plants which are attributed to them.

NATCHETRONS.

NATCHETRONS.

NAMES OF THE NATCHETRONS.	QUADRUPEDS.	BIRDS.	PLANTS.
1. Assouadi. - -	Good.	Horse. - - - -	Etti.
2. Barani. - -	Bad.	Male Elephant. -	Nelie.
3. Cartigue. - -	Bad.	Goat. - - - -	Atti.
4. Rogueni. - -	Good.	Couvre Capelle.	Jambelon.
5. Mourgasigani.	Good.	Char *. - - - -	Ebene.
6. Tirvadere. - -	Bad.	Dog. - - - -	Chinguérecái.
7. Pouarpouchon.	Good.	Cat. - * 4 - -	Bambou.
8. Pouchon. - -	Good.	Male Buffalo. -	Arechi.
9. Arillion. - -	Bad.	He Cat. - - -	Mounemaron.
10. Magon. - -	Good.	House Rat. - -	Alémaron.
11. Pouróm. - -	Bad.	Musk Rat. - -	Pilachi.
12. Outiram. - -	Good.	Bull. - - -	Areli.
13. Astom. - - -	Good.	Female Buffalo.	Antimaron.
14. Chittére. - -	Bad.	Tyger. - - - -	Couvelemaron.
15. Souadi. - - -	Good.	He Goat. - - -	Marondemaron.
16. Villagom. - -	Bad.	Tigress. - - - -	Velamaron.
17. Amouchon. -	Good.	Hind. - - -	Mouguemaron.
18. Quete. - - -	Bad.	Stag. - - -	Paraimaron.
19. Moulon. - -	Good.	Bitch. - - -	Maramaron.
20. Pouradon. - -	Bad.	Monkey. - - -	Vangimaron.
21. Outraron. - -	Good.	Mangouste. - -	Jaquier.
22. Tirouvanen. -	Good.	She Monkey. - -	Areque.
23. Avouton. - -	Good.	Lioness. - - -	Vanimaron.
24. Chadcom. - -	Good.	Mare. - - -	Caramboumaron.
25. Pouratadi. - -	Bad.	Lion. - - -	Tema.
26. Outyatadi. - -	Good.	Cow. - - -	Vambou.
27. Acvadi. - -	Good.	Female Elephant. -	Ellipe.

* Name of a snake, which the Indians esteem to be the male of the Couvre Capelle.

† I imagine they have put this animal among the birds because it is nimble, and hops from one branch to the other.

‡ It seems the Indians rank this insect among the birds, on account of its having wings.

TIDIS,

TIDIS, or the Days of the Moon.

The day of the new moon is called Amavasse, and that of the full moon Parouvon. These two days are always unlucky. The time of the moon's increase is called Sonquilapatcham*, or Parouvapatcham †; that of its decline is named Kitchanapatcham ‡, or Abarapatcham §.

Names of the Lunar Days.

1. Predame - - or Pattyami - - Bad.
2. Tondiguei - or Vitiya - - - Good.
3. Trediguei - or Tiya - - - Good.
4. Chaori - - or Savondi - - - Bad.
5. Pangemi - or Pangfami - - Good.
6. Chasti - - or Satchti - - - Good.
7. Sattami - - or Chademi - - Good.
8. Atchemi - - or Astimi - - - Indifferent.
9. Noami - - or Navami - - - Bad.
10. Decemi - - or Tafami - - - Good.

* Sonquilam signifies whiteness, light, on account of the brightness with which the moon seems to be enlightened, at the beginning of the night after the new moon.

† Parouvan signifies the first cause, the anterior part.

‡ Kitcham, or Quichen, signifies blackness.

§ Abaram means the hinder part.

11. Yagadechi - or Egacataffi - - Good.
12. Douadechi - or Touvataffi - Good.
13. Tredechi - or Teriyotasi - - Good.
14. Saderatachi - or Sadourataffi - Good.

They make use of the term Bagoula, which signifies obscurity, to express the time after the full moon: and that of Soutta, which means splendour, to express the time after the new moon.

When they want to point out a Tidi, or day of the moon, they say, such a Tidi after the Amavasse, or after the Parouvon of such a month.

The names of the Tidis are the numerical names of the Samscroutam language; the Indians, in the course of time, made divinities of them. The days of the Amavasse and of the Parouvon, of all the months, are days of fasting and prayer for their dead ancestors; that is to say, if they do not fall on a feast day.

LAQUEONS.

The Laquenons are signs of the Zodiac; the sun enters one of these signs every month, and the twelve daily pafs by the earth. To know

know under which Laquenon they are, at a certain hour of the day, they begin to count from the first hour of the Laquenon of the month, and then the others, according to their rank: the duration of each Laquenon is fixed, and their total gives sixty najigues.

NAMES OF THE MONTHS.		NAMES OF THE LAQUENONS.		DAILY DURATION.
April,	Chittere.	Mechon,	the Ram,	Good. 4 najigues $\frac{1}{4}$
May,	Vayalli.	Richebon,	the Taurus,	Good. 4 - - - - $\frac{1}{2}$
June,	Ani.	Midounon,	the Gemini,	Good. 5 - - - - $\frac{1}{2}$
July,	Addi.	Carcadagon,	the Cancer,	Bad. 5 - - - - $\frac{1}{2}$
August,	Avani,	Singam,	the Lion,	Good. 5 - - - - $\frac{1}{4}$
September,	Pretachi.	Canni,	the Virgo,	Good. 5 - - - - 11
October,	Arpichi.	Tolam,	the Libra,	Bad. 5 - - - - 11
November,	Cartigue,	Virchigon,	the Scorpion,	Bad. 5 - - - - $\frac{1}{2}$
December,	Margazi,	Danaffon,	the Arc,	Bad. 5 - - - - $\frac{1}{2}$
January,	Tai.	Maharan,	the Crocodile,	Good. 5 - - - - $\frac{1}{4}$
February,	Massi.	Counbon,	the Vase,	Bad. 4 - - - - $\frac{3}{4}$
March,	Pangoumi.	Minon,	the Fish,	Good. 4 - - - - $\frac{1}{4}$

60 najigues.

These names signify the same thing as ours, except Midounon, which means the Gemini; of which one holds a club, and the other a guitar; instead of the club and arrow which we give to the Gemini. Danaffon means a bow; and not, as with us, the Sagittarius, who uses it.

K k 2

Maharan

Maharan is a kind of a fabulous fish, celebrated for its exploits; and has great affinity to the crocodile. The Indians also call it Sourra.

The most happy months for contracting a marriage, building a house, digging a well, constructing a choultry, &c. are the months of Chittere, Vayassi, Addi, and Tai. The other months are less happy, and in which particular circumstances alone can induce the Indians to do any acts of consequence: they are the months of Ani, Avani, and Pangouni. In the month Cartigue, they only marry in second marriages; but in the other months of the year the Indians never undertake any thing of consequence without being forced to it: these months are reputed very unlucky.

YOGONS.

There are twenty-seven Yogons, which commonly last each sixty najigues. They succeed each other without interruption. Their names are,

1. Vichecambon, - Good.	6. Adicandon, - - - Bad.
2. Pridi, - - - - Good.	7. Sougarneon, - - Good.
3. Aichtneman, - - Good.	8. Dourt, - - - - Good
4. Saoubaguinen, - Good.	9. Choulom, - - - Bad..
5. Sabonon, - - - - Good.	10. Guetom, - - - - Bad.
	11. Virti,

11. Virti, - - - - -	Good.	20. Chivon, - - - - -	Good.
12. Dourouvon, - - -	Good.	21. Chiddon, - - - - -	Good.
13. Viagaden, - - -	Bad.	22. Saddion, - - - - -	Good.
14. Archenon, - - -	Good.	23. Soubon, - - - - -	Good.
15. Vatchetron, - - -	Good.	24. Soubranion, - - -	Good.
16. Siddi, - - - - -	Good.	25. Broumon, - - - - -	Good.
17. Vedibadon, - - -	Bad.	26. Mahandron, - - -	Good.
18. Varianon, - - -	Good.	27. Vaitredi, - - - - -	Bad.
19. Parigon, - - - - -	Good.		

The seventeenth Yogan, which I have written according to the Tamoul pronunciation Vedibadon, is known, at Surat, by the name of Vatibate: it is regarded so very ominous, that it serves as a collective name for all unlucky days: and yet, although this Yogan happens but once every twenty-seven days, they nevertheless call all the unlucky days, at Surat, Vatibate; and when the Indians wish to excuse themselves from business on account of a bad day, they say it is Vatibate.

C A R E M O N S.

The Caremons are to the number of eleven; two happen every day, and each lasts thirty najigues; their names are,

1. Baron, - - - - Good.	7. Pattire, - - - - Good.
2. Balevon, - - - Good.	8. Sagounon - - - Bad.
3. Caoulevon, - - - Good.	9. Sadouchoudon, Bad.
4. Tahudele - - - Good.	10. Nagaron, - - - Bad.
5. Guenessi, - - - Good.	11. Guimedouguenon, Bad.
6. Vani, - - - - Good.	

The Tidis, the Natchetrons, and the Yoggons, last commonly sixty najigues. However, it sometimes happens that their duration may be sixty-six and a half, or reduced to fifty-three and a half ; but they never increase or decrease.

The Caremons may also diminish or increase three najigues. The cause of these differences is unknown to the common Bramins.

I never could learn from any Bramin what a Yogan and a Caremon was. And, notwithstanding the Indians esteem them as very essential for the happiness or misery of their lives, they know only the names, duration, and their good and bad qualities. They absolutely depend on the Bramins for the explanation of every thing in which they are concerned, in such manner that they are obliged to have recourse to them when they want any information relative to their religion, and even

even to their customs. The Bramins always hesitate in instructing them, for fear they should penetrate into their mysteries; which would ruin the ascendancy which they have over the minds of the people. Many Indians whom I consulted, although they were perfectly acquainted with the history of their gods, were absolutely ignorant, and hardly would give themselves the trouble to know the days in which they lived. Content with what the Pandjangancarers informed them every morning, they desired nothing further.

The manner of reckoning the good and bad days is not particular to the Tamouls, but is common over all India.

The Pandjangan, which is the almanac of the Tamouls, shows the Varons, or days of the week, the Natchetrons, the Yogons, the Caremons, and the Tidis; and also shows if they are lucky, and the time when they begin. The Pandjangancarers, or Bramins who carry the Pandjangan, are obliged to announce them every morning, in the houses to which they belong; they also inform them (but this is not obligatory), what day of the month

month it is, and when the Vartchians happen. They have no occasion to mention the Rougoucalous, the Couliquens, and the Lagnenons, because their duration is constant, and they happen daily at stated hours.—With regard to the festivals, as they come with the Natchetrons, or the Tidis, excepting the Pongol, and the first day of the year which begins with the sun, it is sufficient to announce the Natchetron, or the Tidi.

The excessive curiosity of the Indians, to know what is to happen, leads them into the pursuit of all methods to penetrate into futurity. The persuasion they have, that such privilege is bestowed on the Bramins, makes them every instant have recourse to these pious imposters. Indians of high cast and wealth, have not only the Natchetron and the Tidi announced to them every day, but still more, they have their fortunes told, and regulate themselves upon the predictions of the Pandjangancarers in the conduct of all their affairs. It may be easily imagined with what a mixture of absurdities and fables these prognostics must abound.

Good

Good or bad days; lucky and unlucky hours; the return from a voyage; a recovery from sickness; the loss of property; in short, every circumstance gives a cause for application to the conjurers. Futurity is also consulted by the flight, crying, or singing of birds. In a word, nothing can conquer the fear with which an Indian is inspired by a bad prognostic; notwithstanding he every day experiences the fallacy of these drawers of horoscopes.

To form prognostics on the periodical disorders of women; to presage on the manner a person has sneezed; to interpret dreams; observe the days proper to be shaved; to inhabit a new house, or build another; to endeavour finding out whether a woman, with child, shall produce a boy or girl; to make use of enchantments against venomous beasts; to know whether the sight of such or such an object presages good or bad, &c. &c. is all denominated science, and forms the principal study of the Bramins; who are interested to keep the people in these superstitious errors, from the profit which they obtain.

C H A P. XIV.

SYMBOL OF THE BRAMINS.

I HAVE esteemed it necessary to finish this work with the Symbol of the Bramins; which will demonstrate that the superstitious customs practised by a credulous and fanatic people, are far distant from the philosophy of the Bramins, whose morality is of the utmost purity.

SYMBOL OF THE BRAMINS.

The Supreme Being, whom we call Chiven, and others Vichenou, is the only being whom we acknowledge to be omnipotent. He is the principle of five elements, of actions, and of motions, which are the cause of life

* This chapter is a simple translation of the Candon.

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and time. Blended with our souls, he gives us existence; therefore, the substance of the soul, and her knowledge, is no other than God himself. He has created all things, preserves all things by his goodness, and in the end will destroy all things. He is the God of Gods, the God omnipotent, the only Lord. The Vedams, the Yagamons, the Chastrons, and the Pouranons, certify the same. All the subaltern divinities are only creatures. God has several times destroyed the world, and recreated the same. He is an omnipresent being; and, like a light, he is spread over all. Eternal, and not born. He is all in all, and will be so, throughout all time. He, alone, has knowledge of himself, and is incomprehensible to all others. Even the gods comprehend not his essence. It is his supreme substance which communicates light to the sun, and to the moon. It is God alone who created the universe by his productive power; who maintains it by his all-preserving power; and who will destroy it by his destructive power; so that it is him who is represented under the name of the three gods,

who are called Trimourti. He has created the gods, men, and animals, only to make his goodness visible. Sometimes he appears not to have either thought, or any sensible quality. Sometimes like fire, which is found in wood, and stones, and in the air. God is found in every thing. His wisdom, power, and designs, are like a vast and boundless ocean, which is not to be traversed or fathomed. Although he has not corporeal propriety, either of great or small extent, he yet, sometimes, taketh a form, that those whom he has created, and were plunged in darkness, may receive the benefit of light. And, notwithstanding the various human forms which he has taken, he is not subject to either pleasures or pains; as he is by his nature unchangeable. There are no other gods but God. No person can unravel, distinguish, or avoid what he has spread through the earth. He fills the earth with his immensity, and is the beginning of all things, without having ever had a beginning.

God who is infinitely smaller than an atom, is infinitely larger than the universe: this independant

dependant deity, this free deity, this God who is all things, exists always alone without attribute, without act, without quality or subjection to time or place; so that he is immutable. This sole and uncompounded deity has no real connexion with matter; as the rays of the moon reflected in the water seem to be in motion with the water that is agitated, without the water having any thing real respecting the moon.

This is the image of this Being, with all that is matter and attribute, passions or actions; this union resembles those dreams in which we imagine illusive objects are seen and felt. God manifests himself in many bodies as well as in many souls; as the sun, the sole body of light, imprints his image in different vases of water. It is from the power of God that the wind blows; that the sun shines; the fire has heat, and that rain falls. In a word, he is the perfection, beginning, end and glory of his worshippers.

With respect to the gods whom we have multiplied, and whom we know under so many different forms, they are only shaped in such

such manner to impress weak and ignorant minds, whose gross religion wanted something material and palpable. They could never comprehend the goodness and greatness of the Supreme Being, without all these representations and images, which makes them think of God when they perceive his attributes; from which attributes, it may be said, so many different deities have been made. On the contrary, those who can comprehend the Supreme Being have no occasion for idols; as the figures, to which we offer our homage, are properly only the resemblances of his being, in the various times he has visited the world, under forms which we honour in memory of his divine appearance, and of the good which they procured us.

We believe also that plants and animals have verily a soul like ourselves; and for this reason all living animals should be respected; and we believe that those who sacrifice them commit a great crime.

We reverence the sanctity of particular places and rivers, because God has promised

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us to spread his divine grace over their inhabitants.

The distinctions of our families are founded on their own origin. We consider the Bramins as the first, because they came out of the face of Brouma ; the Chatriers as the second, because they came from his shoulders ; the Vassiers are the third, as they came from his belly ; and the Choutres have the fourth rank, as they came from his feet. Probably these origins are only allegorical figures of the truth; but we believe them as realities. This is our faith, and creed. — It is not perfect, because we are ignorant in what manner to please God better ; but the greatness, and abundance of his mercy, supplies what is wanting in our worship. We know only, that we ought to fear and serve God : and in that we all agree. And, notwithstanding the difference of our sects, we all agree, and unanimously confess, that those who do good, shall be rewarded according to their good works; and those who have done evil, punished for their bad actions. The goodnes

goodness of God impedes not his justice ; and his justice hurts not his goodness ; but the secrets of his conduct are impenetrable. Who can fathom the profundity of his judgments ?—We adore his incomprehensibility !



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

